

WIT, HUMOUR AND FANCY OF PERSIA

BY

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New Impression.

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To

Professor Edward Granville Browne

M.A., M.B., M.R.C.S., M.R.A.S., F.B.A., F.R.C.P., &c.,

The Eminent Persian and Arabic Scholar

who has rendered

Signal Service to Persian Literature.

PREFACE.

—: 0 :—

The first edition of this book was published in 1894, under the title "The Wit and Humour of the Persians," and was dedicated to my friend Mr. Hyder Cumruddin Tyebji, to whom I owe my taste for Persian Poetry, and whose death in August 1902 has been an irreparable loss to me.

The present edition, under a new title, contains most of the old matter with much new addition, the latter forming about forty per cent. of this volume.

In the first edition there were, from various causes, many errors in the Persian verses, but they have, I believe, all been corrected in the present edition. Most of the corrections were suggested to me, shortly after the publication of the book, by Professor M. Ahmad, of Holkar College, Indore, who, though a stranger to me, was kind enough to take so much trouble on my behalf. He is at present Professor of Persian in Wilson College, Bombay, and I take this opportunity of conveying to him my best thanks for the valuable help he gave me years ago.

The translation of the verses has also been revised, where necessary, but for the most part the old free rendering has been retained. In the new portion, however, the translation is more literal, and an attempt has been made to make it more in consonance with the spirit of the original.

Before the present work was placed in the hands of the printer, the Persian portion was submitted to Mr. Muhammed Ja'afar Mowla, a Persian scholar, to whom I was introduced by a mutual friend, and I am much indebted to him also for several corrections made and for valuable information about variant readings. It must, he mentioned that some additions and alterations were

and these* Mr. Mowla has not seen.

In Part I the order of the sections has been changed, and so are also the titles of some of them. In Part II the stories have been rearranged on a definite plan, so that stories of like nature come together.

Of Arabic and Persian words naturalised in the English language, and of many familiar proper names, the English spelling given is, at times, the conventional spelling and not the exact transliteration, and this is specially the case with matter taken from the first edition.

In spite of care exercised there must be many inaccuracies still, and I ask the reader's indulgence for them.

Not being a Persian scholar, and my range of reading being limited to a few books, I realise that the collection I have made is a poor one; and I doubt not that from the field of Persian Literature left unexplored by me a competent scholar could have made a wider and a better selection of Persian Wit and Humour.

The nature of my occupation and the very little time it leaves me, combined with the lack of facility in Bombay for consulting the works of a good many writers, have also prevented me from making the collection so good as I could have wished, and I have to leave it as it is, for the judgment of the discerning public.

For some of my own verses† that I have taken the liberty of introducing in four sections of the book I have to urge the same plea that I put forth in the first edition—that the opportunity was convenient and the temptation strong.

In the correction of the English portion of the proofs I have received considerable help from my son Ardeshir who has devoted very minute care thereto.

M. N. KUKA.

BOMBAY, *December*, 1923.

* These are passages Nos. 92, 101, 102, 103, 109 (on pages 114 to 122), Nos. 17 to 20 (pages 149 to 152), No. 77 (page 177), Nos. 67 to 70 (page 195), No. 10 (page 198) and No. 34 (page 213).

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ERRATA.

Page.		Incorrect.	Correct.
44	Line 9	ove	love.
55	Line 14	نقش قالی را	نقش قالی را
96	Line 10	می بنالید	می بنالده
131	8th line from the bottom	withness	witness.
154	4th line from the bottom	کرد	کرد
166	No. 52	hookkhah	hookkah.
187	No. 21 last line	شید ا	شید
200	3rd line from the bottom	singleh air	single hair
268	Line 4	The striking mentioned	"The striking mentioned
271	Line 22	but a strong hurricane	"but a strong hurricane
275	Line 11	mself	himself.
290	7th line from the bottom	beck	back
302	{ Line 8 Last line	"O w se man ing	"O wise man was disputing
307	Line 7	see	she
310	6th line from the bottom	here	"here
317	9th line from the bottom	the found	he found
330	{ Line 16 Line 33 Line 36	mames did the make 'Kaun-o-Ma kân'	names did he make 'Kaun-o-Makân'
331	Line 3	first	fist

LIST OF BOOKS

FROM WHICH SELECTIONS HAVE BEEN MADE.

—: 0 :—

آتش كنده آذر

تذكرة دولت شاه سمرقندی

مجمع الفصحا of Rizâ Kulî Khan.

خزانة عامره

تذكرة حسینی

تذكرة مرأة الخيال

بهار معجم (Dictionary)

هفت قلزم (Dictionary)

چهار مقاله نظامی عروضی سمرقندی

شعر المعجم of Moulana Shiblî Nu'mânî.

Biographies of Persian Poets, contained in the Târikh-i-Guzidah,

Ed. & tr. by Prof. Edward G. Browne.

لباب الالباب محمد عوفي Ed. and tr. by Prof. Edward G. Browne.

المعجم في معايير اشعار المعجم Ed. by Mirza Muhammad Qazwini and

Prof. Edward G. Browne.

A Literary History of Persia, by Prof. Edward G. Browne.

A History of Persian Literature under Tartar Dominion, by

Prof. Edward G. Browne.

The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia, by Prof. Edward G. Browne.

Persian Gems, by Mirza Kalichbeg Faridunbeg.

مجموعة لطائف by Syed Muhammad Mir Hasan.

الزاقى of كتاب الخراين

مثنوى مولانا روى

رباعيات عمر خيام

مثنوى نعمت خان عالى

كليات عبيد زانگانی

بهارستان جامي

خارستان خواجه مجد الدين خواف

پريشان نامه قاآنى

زاهر الربيع

لطائف الطوائف على بن حسن واعظ كاشفى

اعجاز خسروى

تاريخ نگارستان

حدائق البلاغت

کتاب ملا نصرالدين

لطائف و ظرايف الاکبر

ملا دوباره نامه

Beale's *Oriental Biography*.

Ouseley's *Persian Poets*.

Fraser's *Persia and Afghanistan*.

Malcolm's *Sketches of Persia*.

مجموعه ابيات وغيره بخط محمد عالم (MS. in the Mulla Firoz Library.)

'*Ilām-en-Nās* by Mrs. Godfrey Clerke.

چمن بی نظير

Commonplace-books (بیاض) of Persian scholars, the late Mr. Dosabhai Munshi, the late Mr. Burjorji Pallonji Deshai, the late Ervad Shehryarji Dadabhai Bharucha, and my friend, the late Mr. Hyder Cumruddin Tyebji.

INTRODUCTION.

—: 0 :—

There is probably no nation that is not endowed with humour of some sort, as we find even savages possessing this faculty to some extent; but the remarkable development of it in certain people, such as the English or the Americans, who have produced writers like Dickens, Lamb, and Mark Twain, is due to ages of culture combined with a special gift of nature.

In Persian Literature humour is not lacking, as is evinced by the funny stories in which the literature abounds, though some of them are traceable to Arabic and other sources. But the humour therein is of a type generally to be found in such stories—that of incident or situation; while the finer and subtler type—that of description, or of investing ordinary events in a droll or grotesque garb, has not been sufficiently cultivated. There are, however, some good examples to be met with here and there, as, for instance, Story No. 253 (in Part II), where the perplexity of the Kâzi is described with consummate art.

In the section dealing with 'Humorous Stories in Verse,' it will be noticed that out of the twenty-four pieces selected fifteen are from the *Masnavi* of Maulânâ Jalâluddîn Rûmî, a didactic poem written with the main object of expounding Sufism and the principles of Ethics. In a serious work of this nature, written by an earnest, religious man, one would hardly expect to find humour, and it is therefore an agreeable surprise to come across this pleasing trait of the poet. We see herein exemplified the saying about humour having its abode in a sympathetic heart.

Humour is the offspring of Freedom, and there is no scope for its proper development under despotic rule; while Wit, which depends on culture and civilization, can find suitable soil in the courts of princes. The Persian nation, since the Revolution which has brought about a change in the form of government, has been experiencing a sense of freedom, and already the signs

are manifest of the expansion of the humorous element in its literature, as can be judged from that valuable compilation of Prof. E. G. Browne—"The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia."

In Wit the Persians make a much better show, though the Wit may be somewhat lacking in diversity. We may not come across good specimens of sustained Irony like that of Swift, of Burlesque like that of Gilbert and Sullivan, of fine Extravagance like that of Mark Twain, and of Parody like that in *Rejected Addresses*; but in Repartees and Epigrams, and in the display of fine Fancy, the Persians can stand comparison with any nation.

Most of the Wit in Persian Literature is to be found expressed in verse, very frequently in extempore verse, in the making of which the Persian poets have peculiar aptitude.

Play on words—real puns in which an expression can convey two meanings—is a form of wit common to many nations, and the Persians know how to use it to advantage in giving point to a joke or sting to an epigram. But long poems like those of Thomas Hood, in which almost every couplet has a pun or two, have been rarely attempted, the only example I have come across being that given on page 173 of this book, from Ne'mat Khân-i-Âli.

It should be mentioned that in the "Enigma" section the long pieces given were not originally written by the poet for the purpose of turning out enigmas—they form the prelude to the *Qasidahs* or panegyric odes, the poet making use of the enigma for turning skilfully, by means of a subtle connecting idea, from the subject of the enigma to the subject of the eulogy.

PART I

ANECDOTES OF POETS AND PRINCES.

1. When Firdousi, on the invitation of Sultan Mehmood, reached the capital of Ghizni, he happened to pass a public garden where the three royal poets, Unsari, Asjadi, and Farrukhi were enjoying themselves. The poets observed him approach, and at once agreed that if the stranger chanced to have any taste for poetry, which they intended to put to the test, he should be admitted to their friendship; and in order to decide as to his merits they settled among themselves to repeat each in his turn a hemistich, and leave to Firdousi to complete the fourth, but at the same time satisfied in their own minds that there was no other word in the Persian language that would rhyme with the three, which they had taken care to pre-occupy.

Firdousi joining them and hearing the proposal, promised to exert his powers. They then commenced each with an extemporaneous hemistich:

Unsari.....	چون عارض تو ماه نباشد روشن
Asjadi.....	مانند رخت گل نبود در گلشن
Farrukhi.....	مژگانگت گذر کند همی از جوشن
Firdousi.....	مانند سنان گویو در جنگ پشن

Unsari—The light of the moon to thy splendour is weak,

Asjadi—The rose is eclipsed by the bloom of thy cheek;

Farrukhi—Thy eyelashes dart through the folds of the Joushan.*

Firdousi—Like the javelin of Geev in the battle of Pushan.†

The poets were astonished at the readiness of the stranger, and ashamed at being totally ignorant of the story of Geev, which Firdousi related as described in the Bástán Nama. They immediately treated him with the greatest kindness and respect, and afterwards introduced him to Mehmood, as a poet capable of undertaking the Sháh Náme.

* Joushan is armour.

† Pushan is the name of a place where a very tough battle was fought between the Persian army of Kaikhosru, under the command of Toos, and the Turanian army of Afrasiyab, under the command of Peeran.

The above extract, with the English verses, is from Beale's *Oriental Biography*.

2. In the time of Sultan Sanjar Seljooki, the rulership of the province of Khwárezm was entrusted to Sultan Atsiz. The latter, however, tried to become an independent prince, and in order to punish him, Sultan Sanjar came down with a large army. Atsiz hereupon took to flight, and fortified himself in the stronghold of Hazár Asp, sending at the same time the following lines to Sultan Sanjar:—

مرا با ملك طاقتِ جنگِ نیست بصلحش مرا نیز آهنگ نیست
 ملك شهریارست و شاهِ جهان گریز از چنین پادشه ننگ نیست
 اگر بادیاست یکرانِ شاه کمیتِ مرا نیز یا لنگ نیست
 بخوارزم آید بسقسین روم خدایِ جهان را جهان تَنگ نیست

"I have not the strength to fight with the king; nor have I the inclination to make peace with him. The king is a powerful sovereign and ruler of the world; and in flying from such a king there is no disgrace. Although the horse which the king bestrides is very fleet, surely, my horse is not lame. The king comes to Khwárezm—I go to Saqsin; verily the world is wide enough for both of us."

Sultan Sanjar followed him to Hazár Asp, and laid siege to that fortress. Poet (انوری) Anwari, who was in the camp of Sanjar, writing on a piece of paper the following lines in praise of his master, sent the paper, fastened to an arrow, to the fortress of the enemy:

ایشاه همه ملكِ جهان حسبِ تراست وز دولت و اقبال شهبی کسبِ تراست
 امروز يك حمله هزار اسپ بگیر فردا خوارزم و صد هزار اسپ تراست

"O king, the kingdom of the world belongs to thee; and Fortune has given thee Royalty as thy calling. In but a single assault capture thou the fortress of Hazár-Asp to-day, and the whole of Khwárezm with a hundred thousand horses* will be thine to-morrow."

It happened that in the fortress was the poet Rasheed-ud-din Watwát, a follower of Atsiz. He, in reply, sent back the following lines in praise of his master Sultan Atsiz:—

شاهها که بجات می صافست نه دُرد اعدای ترا ز غصه خون باید خورد
 کر خصمِ تو ای شاه بود رستمِ کُرد يك خر ز هزار اسپ نتواند برد

* A play on the word Hazár-Asp, which also means "a thousand horses."
 also means "a hundred (fortresses like) Hazár-Asp."

"O king, in thy cup is pure wine and not dregs, while thine enemies have to drink blood, through mortification. Even if the warrior Rustom were to come as thy foe, he would not be able to take away a single ass from Hazár-Asp."

These lines enraged Shah Sanjar very much, and he swore that, if ever Rasheed fell into his hands, he would have him cut into seven pieces. After a time the fortress was conquered, Atsiz fled, and Rasheed-ud-din Watwát concealed himself. He had, however, a friend in Najeeb-ud-din Munshi, the secretary of the king, whom he induced to intercede for him with the monarch. Accordingly, one day when the Shah was rather in good humour, the secretary observed, that 'Watwát' (which literally means 'a sparrow') was but a very small bird, whom it was hardly possible to cut into two pieces, much less into seven. The Shah hereupon laughed and forgave the poet Watwát.

3. Nasruddin, a chieftain of the tribe of "Kabood-Jámah," fell under the displeasure of Sultan Takash (سلطان تكش), who sent some one to kill him and bring him his head. Nasruddin, however, prevailed upon the messenger to take him alive to the court of the Shah. When the Shah saw him brought *alive*, he became angry with the messenger, but Nasruddin immediately addressed the king with the following verses, which so much pleased the monarch that he not only gave him his life, but embraced him and made him a high officer :—

من خاکِ تو در چشمِ خرد می آرم عذرت نه یکی نه ده که صد می آرم
سر خواسته بدست کس نتوان داد می آیم و بر گردنِ خود می آرم

"I apply the dust under thy feet as collyrium to the eyes of my wisdom. I bring with me apologies, not one, nor ten, but a hundred. The head that thou didst require I could not entrust to any insignificant person; so I come myself, and I bring it on my shoulders."

4. Khwájeh Ameer Beg, the poet, falling under the displeasure of Shah Tehmasp Safavi, was imprisoned in one of the fortresses of Khorasan. When Abdullah Khan Uzbek temporarily occupied Khorasan, he sent to the Khwajeh a note containing only this verse :—

ای خواجه بعد ازین طمع از زندگی بُهر زانرو که گشته مستندِ خانی مقام ما

"Oh Khwajeh, henceforth give up all hopes of life; for the throne of royalty has become our seat."

The Khwajeh, in reply, sent the following lines, at the end of which he skilfully incorporated a couplet of the celebrated poet Háfiz:—

ای باد اگر باهل خراسان گذر کنی	•	زنهار عرضه ده بر ایشان پیام ما
وانگه بگو براه وفا آن گروه را	•	کای گشته کینه خواه شما خاص و عام ما
کلك غرور و جہل شما ثبت کرده بود	•	در رقعہ کہ بود در آن رقعہ نام ما
کای خواجه بعد ازین طمع از زندگی بسر	•	زانرو کہ گشته مسند خانی مقام ما
ای مدعی مگر نه شنیدی کہ می رسد	•	شاه ستاره خیل و سپهر احتشام ما
باشد جواب دعوی خانی کہ کرده	•	بیتی کہ گفته حافظ شیرین کلام ما
چندان بود کرشمه و ناز سہی فدان	•	کاید بجلوه سرو صنوبر خرام ما

"O breeze, if thou goest towards Khorasan, convey to the people a message from me. Tell these people faithfully—'O ye! on whom our people high and low have vowed vengeance, ye have, in your conceit and ignorance, written to me a note containing these lines:—

'O Khwajeh, henceforth give up all hopes of life, for the throne of royalty has become our seat.'

I would say in reply, "Vain pretender! hast thou not heard that our king is coming with a force innumerable as the stars, and with a splendour like that of the heavens? Thy pretensions to royalty can best be answered by quoting the verse of our sweet Háfiz—

'The coquetry and blandishments of the straight-statured damsels will only last till the arrival of our walking cypress in all her gracefulness.'"

5. The poet Haidary (حیدری) of Tabreez wrote an eulogy on one of the Mogul emperors of India, but could get no opportunity of reciting it in his presence. He therefore wrote the following verses and sent them to the king, incorporating at the end a couplet of Háfiz:—

در مدح یادشاه سخن ستیج ملک هند	•	گفتم قصیدہ کہ پسندید هر کہ دید
اما چو روزگار مددگار من نبود	•	زان شاخ گل بیای دلم خار غم خلید
نشند شاه عقده کشا مصرعی از من	•	نکشوده قفل آرزوی من ازان کلید
بودم ز آب دیده خود غرق بحر خون	•	کز غیب این ترانه بگوش دلم رسید
حافظ وظیفہ تو دعا گفتن است و بس	•	در بند آن میاش کہ نشنید یا شنید

"In the praise of the Emperor of India I wrote a poem that was approved of by every one; but as Fortune did not favour me, instead of culling a flower from the rose-bush I got pricked by a thorn. The Emperor heard not a single line, and this key opened not the padlock of my hopes. I was in great grief owing to this misfortune, when I heard a celestial voice singing this verse:—
 'Hâfiz, thy duty is to sing praises, and it sufficeth; do not worry thyself as to whether thy words are heard or not.'"

The Emperor was pleased with the verses, and ordered that money and a robe of honour should be given to the poet. But the poet had to wait for many days owing to the dilatoriness of the treasurer, whereupon he again sent these lines to the Emperor:—

مشکلی دارم شها خواهم کنم پیش تو عرض
 زآنکه زین مشکل مرا صد داغِ حسرت بردل است
 سیم و زر انعام کردی لیک از خازن مرا
 هم گرفتن مشکل و هم نا گرفتن مشکل است

"O King, I am under a difficulty, and I want to apprise thee of it; for it has been to me the cause of infinite sorrow. Thou hast ordered that I should be given gold and silver in reward, but it is hard for me to get the amount from the treasurer, and equally hard to do without it."

It is needless to add that this time the poet received the reward promptly.

6. Abdulla Khan Uzbek once visited the tomb of Rustom, and, while there, gave utterance to these verses:—

سر از خاک بردار و ایران بین بگام دلیرانِ توران زمین

"Raise thy head from the dust, and look at Persia, now subject to the brave warriors of Turan."

A bold and witty wazier of his, who was present, said, "I know what Rustom would reply could he speak." "And what would the reply be?", asked Abdulla Khan; "speak out without fear." Thus urged, the wazier replied, "Rustom's answer would be this:—

* چو بیشه تهی ماند از زره شیر شغالات بیشه در آید دلیر

* Another account is that it was Taimur the Lame (Tamerlane), who thus boasted, and the retort of his wazier was:—

گذشتند شیران ازین مرغزار کند روبه لنگ اینجا شکار

"From this wood the lions have passed away, and now it is the lame fox that here doth prowl for prey."

‘When the forest has been deserted by the brave lions, the jackals come in with a bold face.’”

7. The Sheikh-ul-Islam of Tabreez presented to the poet Mulla Mehommed Assar one of his old and cast-off garments. Such a present from a religious man, being considered a token of high esteem, is generally worn for some days, in public, by the man presented with it. But as the poet did not like to go about in the dirty, worn out garment, he sent the following lines to the Sheikh as an excuse for not putting it on:—

جامه بخشید شیخ اسلام اعظم بنده را : و مبارك جامه سال فراوان یافته
 رشته حوا از برای آدمش در بدو حال : سریش درکار گاه از بهر عیسی یافته
 وانکه از مقتول یشم نافه پیغمبرش : فاطمه کشته رفوگر هر کجا بشگافه
 من چه حد دارم که بوشم جامه را کاندراو : آفتاب طلعت چندین پیغمبر یافته

“The Sheikh-ul-Islam has presented me with a garment—a blessed garment that has seen many years. In the beginning of creation, its warp was prepared by Eve, for Adam; and Mary wove it in the loom for Jesus. Afterwards, the torn places were patched up by Fátimah with the thread made from wool taken from the Camel of the Prophet. Who am I, that I should put on the garment wherein have blazed the suns of so many prophets?”

8. Once in the Court of Shah Sanjar, the poet Rasheed-ud-deen Watwat was given a seat lower than that assigned to many others of less renown. This was the occasion for the poet's writing the following verses:—

دانی شها که دور فلک در هزار سال : چوت من یگانه تنهاید صد هنر
 گر زیر دست هر خس و ناکس نشانیم : آنجا لطیفه ایست بدانم من این قدر
 بحر است مجلس تو و در بحر بیخلاف : لولو بریر باشد و خاشاک بر زبر

“O king, you know that the heavens in their revolutions will not bring forth for a thousand years a man so unique as myself. If, then, you assign to me a lower seat than that given to mere nobodies, I perceive the subtle fancy underlying. Your Court is like an ocean wherein, verily, the pearls are at the bottom, and the weeds at the top.”

9. Once Sultan Tughán Shah Siljooki, playing backgammon with one of his courtiers, wanted to throw two sixes, but the throw

of the dice turned out two aces, the sixes being at the bottom.

The monarch lost his temper, and the courtiers began to tremble for their lives. Hereupon, Hakeem Arzaki, who was present, immediately went to the court musician, and told him to sing there and then the following quatrain, which the Hakeem had composed extempore:—

گر شاه دوشش خواست و دو يك نقش افتاد : هان ظنّ نبری که كمبتین داد نداد
آت نقش که کرده بود شاهنشاه یاد : در خدمتِ شاه روی برخاک نهاد*

“If the king wanted two sixes, and the throw turned out two aces, beware, think not that the dice did not obey his wishes. The points which the king desired came with their face to the ground in token of humility, and out of respect for the king.”

The verses pleased the monarch so very much, that he ordered the Hakeem's mouth to be filled with jewels.

10. The poet Dáwary of Káshán wrote an ode in praise of some one who was a native of Khorásán. But the party praised said that the poem had no sense in it, whereupon the poet sent him the following epigram:—

در خراسان مدحتی گفتم نه از روی طمع : او غلط فهمیده گفتا مدح ما معنی نداشت
گفتمش بسیار نیکو گفتمی این انصاف بود : بنده هم دانسته ام مدح شما معنی نداشت

“In Khorásán I praised some one, but not with the object of getting any reward from him. He, misunderstanding my motive, said that the eulogy written by me had no sense in it. I told him, ‘You are right; I, too, know, that there was no *sense* in praising you.’”

11. Sultan Mehmood Ghaznawi had a favourite slave named Ayáz. One evening when the king had indulged rather freely in the wine cup, he cut off the long tresses of Ayáz. Next morning, on seeing his favourite slave shorn of his beautiful ringlets, the king recollecting the incidents of the last evening, was very much put out. He sat moody and pensive for the greater part of the

* The last two lines are in some books given thus:—

شش چون نگرست حشمتِ حضرتِ شاه : از هیبتِ شاه روی بر خاک نهاد

“When the ‘Six’ beheld the grandeur of the Royal presence, it laid its face on the ground from awe of the King.”

day, and none of the courtiers had the courage to go to him, till at last the poet laureate Unsari made the venture. As the poet was another favourite of the King, the latter on seeing him said—"Come, I have been longing to see you. Have you seen what misery I have brought on myself with my own hands? Have you any way of consoling me?" The poet in reply recited the following extemporaneous verses:—

کی عیبِ سرِ رلفِ بت از کاستن است : چه جای بتم نشستن و خاستن است
روزِ طرب و نشاط و می خواستن است : کاراستنِ سرو ز پیراستن است

"How can, shearing the locks of the beloved, be considered a defect? And why should there be any worrying about it? Nay, this is a day for song, and mirth, and wine; for it is by pruning that the cypress can be made to look more lovely."

The Sultan was delighted, and he ordered that the poet's mouth should be thrice filled with jewels.

12. One day Sultan Mehmood was preparing to go a riding, but the horse on which he was mounted stumbled, and the king had a light fall. The poet Unsari, who was present, hereupon addressed the king in these verses:—

شاهِ ادبی کن فلکِ بدخو را : کافت برسانید رخِ نیکو را
گر گوی غلط رفت بچوگانش زن : وراسپِ خطا کرد بمن بخش او را

"O king, admonish thou the perverse sky that has allowed this mischance to occur. If a ball goes astray, strike it with the bat, but when a horse stumbles give him to me."*

The king presented him with the horse; and after some days, in the course of conversation, asked him what he had done with the animal. The poet replied:—

رفتیم بر اسبِ تا بجرمش بکشم : گفتا بشنو نخست این عذرِ خوشم
نی گاوِ زمینم که جهات بر گیرم : نی چرخِ چهارم که خورشید کشم

"I went to the horse to kill him for that fault of his; but the animal begged me to listen to his pleasing plea. Said he, 'I am not the earth-supporting Bull that I should uphold the *world*, nor am I the fourth sphere that I should support the *Sun*.'"[†]

* There is a pun here. او را بمن بخش also means "forgive him for my sake."

† The earth is supposed to rest on the horns of a bull. There are seven spheres, each belonging to a planet, and the fourth sphere belongs to the Sun.

This double praise of the Sultan, who in one verse was compared to the world, and in the other to the Sun, earned for the poet another substantial reward.

13. Sultan Baiqera, the grandson of Tamerlane, once ordered that 500 gold pieces (in Turkish *يوشون*) should be given to the poet (*برندق*) Barandaq. But the Court secretary wrote out a cheque for only 200 coins, whereupon the poet next day presented the following lines to the Sultan:—

شاه دشمن گدازِ دوست نواز : آن جهانگیر کو جهاندار است
 بیش یوشون نمود انعام : لطفِ سلطان بنده بسیار است
 سی صد از جمله غایب است کنون : در براتم دو صد یدیدار است
 یا مگر من غلط شنیدستم : یا که پروانه چی غلط کار است
 یا که اندر عبارتِ ترکی : بیش یوشون دویت دینار است

“The king who is the slayer of enemies, the protector of friends, and the conqueror and ruler of the world, ordered that 500 gold pieces should be given me as a reward, for the favour of the Sultan on his slave is boundless. But out of the amount 300 coins have disappeared, and only 200 are to be seen in the cheque given to me. It may be that I have heard imperfectly, or it may be that the secretary is a blundering fellow; or perhaps in the Turkish tongue, the expression *يوشون* means only 200 dinars.”*

* In Beale's *Oriental Biography*, I find the following admirable translation of the Persian verses:—

The Shah, the terror of his foes,
 Who well the sound of flattery knows,
 The conqueror of the world, the lord
 Of nations vanquished by his sword,
 Gave, while he praised my verse, to me
 Five hundred ducats as a fee.
 Great was the Sultan's generous mood,
 Great is his servant's gratitude,
 And great the sum; but strange to say
 Three hundred melted by the way!
 Perhaps the word in Turkish tongue
 Convenient meaning may contrive;
 Or else, my greedy ear was wrong
 That turned two hundred into five.

The Sultan laughed and said : " In the Turkish tongue the expression is equivalent to 1,000 dinars"; and he ordered 1,000 dinars to be paid to the poet there and then.

14. Rasheedy and 'Ama'aq Bokhari were both poets, belonging to the Court of Sultan Sanjar and were both rivals of each other.

Once the Sultan asked of the latter his opinion of Rasheedy as a poet. He replied, " He is a good poet, but his verses have no salt in them" (*i.e.*, are lacking in elegance and wit).

The Sultan turned to Rasheedy and said, " What say you to this criticism?" Rasheedy turned towards his rival and immediately replied in the following verses :—

شمرهای مرا به بی نمکی : عیب کردی روا بود شاید
شعر من همچو شکر و شهد است : اندرین دو نمک نکو ناید
شلجم و باقلاست گفته تو : نمک ای قلیبان ترا باید

" Thou hast found fault with my verses saying that they have no salt in them. Thou art right. My verses are like sugar and honey; and salt will but spoil the taste of these two. But thy verses are like turnips and boiled beans; and to thee, O villain, salt is indispensable."

15. In the time of Sultan Mehmood Sabaktegen, one Beghoo-bin-Tughan Shah was the ruler of the province of Qabá in Turkestan.

At his death his kingdom was portioned out to his five sons. When Sultan Mehmood conquered Samargand and Transoxiana he required tribute from these brothers. This they refused to give, and sent the following insolent reply to the Sultan :—

ما پنج برادر از قبائیم : دریا دل و آفتاب رائیم
ما ملک زمین همه گرفتیم : اکنون بتفکر سمائیم
گر چرخ بگام ما نکرده : چنبر زهمش فرو کشائیم

" We are five brothers from Qabá, with hearts large as the ocean, and intellects bright as the sun. We have conquered all the kingdoms of the world, and are now thinking of conquering the sky. If the heavens do not revolve in accordance with our desires, we shall put their wheels out of order."

The Sultan, in order to punish them, sent a large army, and at

the same time told the poet Unsari to reply to their letter, which the poet did in the following manner:—

نمود بهمن یور آذر : می گفت خدای خلق ما ئیم
جبار بنیم پشه او را : خوش داد سزا و ما گوائیم

“Nimrod, in the time of the son of Azar (*i.e.*, Abraham), said, ‘I am the creator of the world.’ The Almighty punished him through the instrumentality of a very small gnat, and to this we bear testimony.”

The brothers now came to their senses, and sent the following lines in quite a different tone, asking for mercy and forgiveness:—

ما پنج برادر از قبا ئیم : در قحط و نیاز مبتلا ئیم
شاه تو عزیز مصر جودی : و اخوان گناهکار ما ئیم
مارا که بضاعتی است مزجات : شرمندۀ حضرت شائیم
بر حالت زار ما بیخشای : از فضل و کرم که بی نوائیم

“We are five brothers from Qabá, grovelling in misery and humility. O king, thou art the Joseph of the Egypt of Generosity, and we are like his guilty brothers. We, whose capital stock is a trifle, stand ashamed in thy presence. Exercise thy generosity, and have mercy on our wretched condition, for we are possessed of nothing.”

The Sultan hereupon withdrew his army, and was content with receiving the tribute.

16. One of the wives of Sultan Sanjar was named *مہستی* Mohsistee, and she was a poetess. One day the Sultan asked her about the condition of the weather. She went to the window and saw that it had snowed. On returning, she gave the desired information in these extempore verses:—

شاه! فلک اسیر سعادت زین کرد : وز جلۀ خسروان ترا تحسین کرد
تا در حرکت مرکب ز زین نعلت : بر گلر نہ نهد پای زمین سبین کرد

“The sky has saddled the horse of thy fortune, O king, and has done thee special honour. In order that thy horse who is shod with gold may not have to tread on the mud, the sky has covered the ground with silver.”

17. Among Persian ladies it is considered an ornament to paint a small mole on the lips. One day Shah Jehan on kissing one

of the ladies of his harem found that the mole got rubbed off in the act ; whereupon he merrily observed *ز اغ از دهان پرید* "The crow flew off the mouth." Next day, when he was in the midst of his courtiers, he uttered the very words of the previous day, and asked his waziers to compose couplets wherein these words should occur.

After a while, one of the waziers got up and recited these lines:—

نیلوفری چه دوش دهن گرد آورید :: زنبور مست بود که آمد در آن خلید
چون آفتاب دید دهن خنده را کشاد :: در عین خنده بود که ز اغ از دهان پرید

"Last evening when the water-lily was about to close its mouth, an infatuated wasp came and entered therein. When the flower saw the sun in the morning, it opened its lips in laughter, and while it was still laughing, *the crow flew off the mouth.*"

[The allusion is to the circumstance that the water-lily closes its petals in the evening and re-opens them in the morning.]

The second wazier spoke these lines:—

بد گربه گرسنه و بصحرا همی دوید :: ز اغی نشسته بر بنکی بی خبر بدید
چون ز اغ را گرفت بموشی نظر فتاد :: خواهد که موش گیرد و ز اغ از دهان پرید

"A cat was hungry and was running about in the forest, when she saw a crow sitting on a branch, unaware of her presence. When she caught the crow her eyes fell on a mouse; she tried to catch the mouse, and *the crow flew off the mouth.*"

The lines of the third wazier were these:—

شاهین گرفته ز اغ بچنگال می پرید :: بحری چو دید صید بدنبال او دوید
ناکه رسید باز قضای خدا نگر :: این هرسه در تحیر و ز اغ از دهان پرید

"A hawk, capturing a crow in his talons, was flying off with it when he saw a heron whom he followed in pursuit. Suddenly a falcon appeared on the field, and while the three were wrangling, (behold the decrees of fate!) *the crow flew off the mouth.*"

The lines of the fourth wazier were, however, nearest the mark, and he received a royal reward. His lines were these:—

خالی که بود بر لب ازان شهد می چکید :: هنگام بوسه دادن آن خال را گزید
در آینه بدید بلب خال را ندید :: حیران ازان بماند که ز اغ از دهان پرید

"On the lips of the beloved was a painted mole which looked

sweet as honey. In the act of kissing the mole was rubbed off. She looked into the mirror and could not see the mole; she was surprised to find that *the crow had flown off the mouth.*"

18. Once Shah Jehan played at chess with a Persian prince and the stakes were that the loser should give the winner one of the ladies of his harem. It happened that in a certain position of the game, the prince threatened mate in a few moves; and Shah Jehan did not know how to avert what seemed to be an inevitable defeat. Before resigning, however, he went into the harem to decide which of the ladies he should give away.

One lady, named *Jehan Begum* (i.e., World) addressed the king thus :—

تو پادشاهِ جهانی جهان ز دست مده : که بادشاهِ جهان را جهان بکار آید

"Thou art king of the world; then let not the *world* go from thy hands, for the king of the world cannot do without the world."

Another lady whose name was *Hàyyàt Begum* (i.e., Existence) uttered these lines:—

جهان خوش است ولیکن حیات می باید : اگر حیات نباشد جهان چه کار آید

"The world is pleasant, but *existence* is essential. When existence is at an end, of what use is the world?"

A third lady called *Fanà Begum* (i.e., Destruction) pleaded her cause in these lines:—

جهات و حیات و همه بی وفاست : طلب کن فنا را که آخر فناست

"The world, existence, and all other things are inconstant. *Destruction* should be thy choice, since destruction is the final goal."

The king then turned to the last and most favourite of his Begums, named *Dilárám*, but she first asked to see the game. On examining the position she saw that by an ingenious series of moves, Shah Jehan would be able to win. Accordingly, her reply was this:—

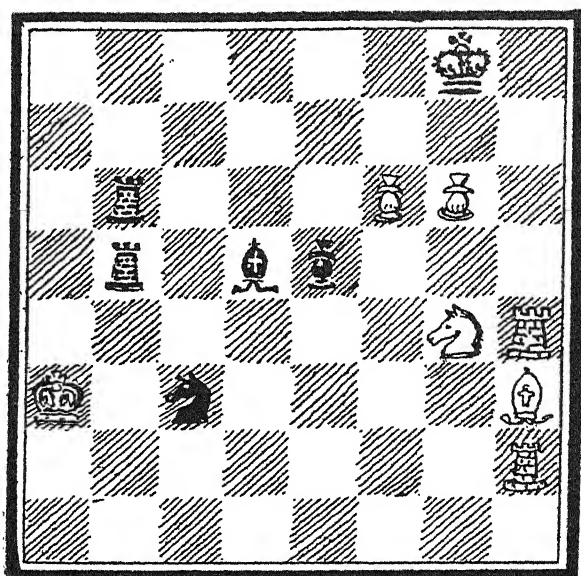
شاه دو رخ بده و دلا رام را مده : بیل و پیاده پیش کن و اسیر گشت و مات

"Give away two rooks, O king, but do not give away thy *Dilárám*. Advance the elephant (i.e., the Bishop) and the pawn, and with the knight give checkmate."

Of course the king returned and finished the game, winning it, and was more than ever fond of the Begum who extricated him from a serious predicament.

The position of the pieces is shown in the subjoined diagram. It is to be observed that in those days, the Bishop's move was to the third square diagonally, jumping over the intermediate square.

Black—Persian Prince.



White—Shah Jehan.

Solution.

- (1) *Rook to Rook's 8th square check.*
King takes Rook.
- (2) *Bishop to Bishop's 5th square discovered check.*
King to Knight's square.
- (3) *Rook to Rook's 8th square check.*
King takes Rook.
- (4) *Pawn to Knight's 7th square check.*
King to Knight's square.
- (5) *Knight to Rook's 6th square, CHECK MATE.*

In order to make the position suit modern play, place the white Bishop on Queen's Knight's square, and the white Knight on Rook's second square; and the white Rook, that is there, should be on the right hand bottom corner. The second move of white would then be:—Knight to Knight's fourth square, discovered check.

19. Zeib-un-nisâ Begum, a daughter of Aurangzebe, was a poetess, and her *nom-de-plume* was مخفی "Makhfi," i.e., "concealed."

A poet once addressed her the following lines:—

بلبل رویت شوم کر در چمن بینم ترا
من شوم پروانه گر در انجمن بینم ترا
خود نمائی میکنی ای شمع محفل خوب نیست
من همی خواهم که در یک یرهن بینم ترا

"If I were to see thee in a garden, I would become a Bulbul for the sake of the roses of thy cheeks; and were I to see thee in an assembly, I would flutter round thee like a moth. O thou Light of Assemblies, it is not proper that thou shouldst show thyself to others; I wish I alone could see thee at close quarters."*

The reply of the Begum was conveyed in these lines:—

بلبل از گل بگذرد چون در چمن بیند مرا
بت یرستی کی کند گر برهن بیند مرا
در سخن مغنی شدم مانند بو در برگ گل
میل دیدن هر که دارد در سخن بیند مرا

"The Bulbul would leave the side of the rose were he to see me in the garden; and the Brahmin on seeing me would give up worshipping idols. Like the perfume in the rose, I lie *hidden*† in Poetry; whosoever wishes to see me can see me in my poems."

20. Once Nur-Jehân while walking in a garden, encountered a poet whom she occasionally quizzed by way of fun. So, on seeing him, she said:—

زمین ترقید و پیدا شد سر خر

"The ground has opened, and the head of an ass has appeared."

But the poet, with the following quick reply, turned the tables on her:—

شیده بوی ماده آمده ز

"On getting the scent of the female, the male has come."

* There seems to be a pun on the words در یک یرهن which also mean "clad in some garment." In this case the last verse would mean—"I wish I could see thee veiled (so that thou couldst not indulge in self-display)."

† Play on the word "Makhfi," her *nom-de-plume*.

There is another version of this anecdote, but I prefer the one given above.

21. Once Zeib-un-nisa resolved on going on a visit to the shrine of a saint. The Sheikh who was in charge of the shrine received due notice of this; but though he waited for many days the Begum did not come, and so he sent her the following verses as a reminder:—

ای که می گوئی که می آیم نمی آئی چرا
بای شوق را مگر رنگِ حنا زنجیرِ یاست

“O thou who sayest ‘I am coming,’ why comest thou not? Is it the ‘Henna’ colour applied to them that shackles the feet of thy devotion?”

The Begum’s reply was as follows:—

گرچه من لیلی لباسم دل چو مجنون بی نواست
سر بصحرا می زدم لیکن حیا زنجیرِ یاست

“Though my garb is that of Leila, my heart is destitute like Majnun’s. I could have traversed deserts, but it is modesty that fetters me.”

The Sheikh again wrote:

عشق تا خام است باشد بسته ناموس و تنگ
پخته مغزانِ جنون را کی حیا زنجیرِ یاست

“As long as Love is imperfect it is shackled by decency and decorum; but to those in whom the passion has reached its maturity, modesty has no shackles for the feet.”

The Begum now sent the following crushing reply, and there the matter ended:—

عاشقانِ ایزدی را سر بسر باشد حیا
چون تو مرغِ بی حیا را کی حیا زنجیرِ یاست

“Those who love the divine essence are enveloped in modesty from head to foot. How can a shameless bird like thee have the chains of modesty on the feet?”

22. Between Jehangir and Nur-Jehan there were frequent sallies of wit. Once while they were standing on a terrace, they saw a man, bent down with age, going along the road. Jehangir hereupon asked:—

چرا خم گشته می کردند پیرانِ جهان دیده

“Why do old men go about with body bent?”

Nur-Jehan instantly replied—

بِزیرِ خاک میجویند ایامِ جوانی را :

“Because in the dust they seek the days of their youth.”*

23. On another occasion Jehangir observed—

بلبلِ نَسیم که نعره کنم در درِ سر دهم : پروانه ام که سوزم و دم بر نیاورم

“I am not like the Bulbul, who, with his loud complaints, causes annoyance to others. I am like the moth, burning but not complaining.”

Nur-Jehan replied—

پروانه من نَسیم که بیک شعله جان دهم : شمع که شب بسوزم و دم بر نیاورم

“I am not like the moth who loses its life in a single flash; I am like the candle, burning all the night and complaining not.”

24. Once the Emperor Jehangir being offended with Nur-Jehan, looked at her, his eyes rolling with displeasure; whereupon she at once mollified him with the following extempore couplet—

ما نَشکِ ظرفانِ حریفِ این قدر سختی نه ایم : دانه اشکیم مارا گردش چشم آسبات

“We delicate vessels are incapable of enduring such affliction. We are grains of tear, to whom the rolling of the eye is like the turning of the mill.”

25. Among Asiatics Saffron-water is generally sprinkled over the dress, both as a perfume and as a symbol of good omen. Once Jehangir observing the stains left by this water on the garments of Nur-Jehan, said to her:—

نیست جانا بر گریبانِ تو رنگِ زعفران : زردیِ رنگِ رخ من شد گریبان گیرِ تو

“Beloved, it is not the stain of Saffron that is on your collar—it is the yellow hue of my face that has caught hold of you by the collar (to reproach you for your cruelty).”

Nur-Jehan in her turn replied—

ترا که تکه لعل است بر لباسِ حریر : شد است قطره خونِ منت گریبان گیر

* has a similar idea in his lines:—

نو جوانی بخاک می جویم : بی سبب نیست قامتِ خمِ ما

‘I seek my youth in the dust: it is not without reason that my stature is bent.’

"You have a ruby button on your silk shirt. Say rather it is a drop of my blood* (shed by you) that has fastened upon your collar demanding retribution."

26. Once Jehangir made the following couplet on the eyes of Nur-Jehan:—

تو هست بادهٔ حسنی بفرما این دو ترکس را :
که برخیزند از خواب و نگه دارند مجلس را :

"Thou art intoxicated with the wine of thy beauty; order those narcissus-like eyes of thine to wake up and keep watch over the assembly."

Nur-Jehan immediately replied as follows:—

مکن بیدار ای ساقی ز خوابِ ناز ترکس را :
که بد مستند و برهم می زنند الحال مجلس را :

"O cup-bearer, do not wake those eyes from their voluptuous sleep, for they are full of witchery, and will forthwith throw into disorder the whole assembly."

27. Once the poet Jámy recited the following verses of his in an assembly:—

بس که در جانِ فگار و چشمِ بیدارم توئی : هر که پیدا می شود از دور پندارم توئی

"Since thy image is constantly present in my afflicted heart and in my wakeful eyes, whenever any one appears from afar *I think it is thou.*"

One of the men present wanting to be funny at the expense of the poet asked him—

ور خری پیدا شود؟

i.e., "What if an ass were to appear?"

Jámy instantly replied, as if in continuation of his verses, and at the same time pointing at him with his finger—

من باز پندارم توئی

"I should still think *it is thou.*"

The would-be wag went away, a sadder and a wiser man.

28. † The poet Khákánée once sent the following lines to Khákán Minochehr Sherwán Shah.

و شقی ده که در برم گیرد : یا وساقی که در برش گبرم

* In Persian amorous poems, the idea of a lover complaining of being killed by the cruelty of the beloved, is frequently to be met with.

† From Ouseley's *Oriental Collections*.

"Give me a warm vest that may embrace me, or a fair slave whom I may embrace."

The Khákán was enraged at the doubt cast on his generosity by the use of the word *l* (i.e., 'or') and sent word to the poet to prepare for punishment. Khákánee, in the presence of the messenger, seized a fly, cut off its wings and feet, and sent the messenger back with the dismembered fly and the following message:—"I wrote the word *l* (i.e., 'with') and not *l*; but this wretched fly alighting on the word while the ink was yet wet, extended the dot with its feet so as to make it appear a double dot; otherwise it should have been, as I originally intended it should be, confident in your majesty's usual generosity, a request for both vest and slave."

The Khákán was pleased with the reply and forgave him.

29. Abáqá Khán once punished with death a certain officer who was convicted of treason. The body was cut into several pieces, which were distributed among the provinces in order to set a wholesome example.

The poet Juwaini has the following epigram on the subject:—

روزی دو سه سر دفترِ تزویر شدی : جویندهٔ مُلک و مال و توفیر شدی
اعضای تو هر یکی گرفت اقلیمی : القصهٔ یک هفته جهانگیر شدی

"For a few days thou wast the repository of guile, and didst seek kingdom, wealth, and plenty. Each of thy limbs is now in possession of a province. In short, thou hast, within a week, become the possessor of the world."

30. The poet Salmán Sáveji once sat till very late at night with Sultan Oweis, drinking wine. When he got up to go home, the Sultan ordered a servant to take up a candlestick and light the poet to his house. On reaching his rooms the poet desired to have the light left with him till the morning. As the candlestick was of gold, the servant went the next day to demand it from the poet, but the latter instead of returning the candlestick, sent the following lines to the Sultan:—

شمع خود سوخت بزاری شبِ دوش و امروز :
گر لکن را طلبید شاه ز من من سوزم :

"The candle burnt itself away with tears last night; and to-day if the king demands the candlestick from me, it is I who burn."

The Sultan laughed, and said: "It is difficult to recover from a poet anything made of gold;" and allowed the poet to keep the candlestick as a present.

31. The poet (قری) Qamaree received a certain monthly allowance from the royal treasury, but on one occasion the sum paid to him by the treasurer was only half the usual sum. There is a pretty allusion to this circumstance in the following verses sent by him to the king:—

خداوندا شها انعام عامت : كزو ماندست دشمن در تآسف
بسنگ آسیا ماند كه نیمی : روان گشت است و نیمی در توقّف

"O king, thy universal bounty which is the cause of grief and envy to thine enemies, is like a grinding mill; for half the part is set in motion, while the other half is at rest."

32. When Ameer Taimur conquered Fars, he sent for the poet Hafiz, and said to him: "In order to make Samarkand and Bukhara (one of which is my capital and the other my birthplace) thriving and flourishing cities, I have devoted so much time and trouble to the conquest of other kingdoms. Now, you, for the sake of a mere mole on the cheek of a beautiful damsel, are ready to give away Samarkand and Bukhara, as you say in your verse:—

اگر آن ترك شیرازی بدست آرد دل ما را :
بخار هندویش بخشم سرقت و بتارا را :

'If that lovely damsel of Shiraz were to accept my heart, I would give Samarkand and Bukhara for the black mole on her cheek.'

How is it you who pretend to give away cities are so very poor and insignificant?" "O Sultan," said Hafiz, "can you not understand that it is by *making gifts like these* that I am reduced to these straits?"

Taimur was pleased with the reply and rewarded the poet.

33. The poet Saghary (ساغری) was a friend of the celebrated poet Jamy. Once the latter, while in a merry mood, wrote the following epigram about Saghary:—

ساغری می گفت دزدان معانی برده اند :
هر کجا در شعری من يك معنی خوش دیده اند :
دیدم اکثر شعرهایش را یکی معنی نداشت :
راست می گفت اینکه معنیهایش را دزدیده اند :

"Sághary used to say, 'The plagiarists have stolen from my verses whatever they saw therein full of good sense.' I saw most of his verses, and not one of them had a grain of sense in it. He was right in saying that the sense was stolen from his verses."

The friends of Sághary took particular delight in quoting these verses in his presence, and he in a great dudgeon came to Jámy, and demanded an explanation, remarking that Jámy seemed to love an epigram better than he did his friends. But Jámy was ready with an excuse. Said he, "I have not made the least mention of you in the verses. I merely spoke of شاعری (*i.e.*, 'a poet'), but as the formation of the word is the same as that of ساغری—your name—the only difference being in the diacritical points—it is your friends who have altered the word to one meaning yourself."

34. The poet Abul-Faraj Sanjari* had such a good memory that he could recite any poem from the beginning to the end on hearing it for the first time. His son could repeat the same on hearing it twice over, and a slave of the poet, on hearing it thrice. Whenever a new poet appeared at court and read a 'Qasideh', or an encomium in praise of the king, Abul-Faraj, if the poem was good, used to claim it as his own composition, and in proof of this would repeat it from memory. He would then call upon his son, and afterwards upon his slave, to do the same; and they too reciting the poem from beginning to end without any blunder, the poor author had to retire in disgrace. So it ultimately happened that new poets, desiring to bask in the royal sunshine, had first to win the favour of Abul-Faraj, who took good care to have only mediocre poets presented at court.

The poet Anwari had just written a 'Qasideh,' which has since become so very famous, and which begins with the lines—

کر دل و دست جبرو کان باشد : دل و دست خدایگان باشد

'If there be a heart (large) like the Sea and a hand (enriching) like the Mine, they are only the heart and the hand of the king,' and he wanted to read it to the king.

He therefore waited upon Abul-Faraj, giving himself the appearance of a half-witted person, and told him he had written a

* In some books the poet Ameer Moazzzi is mentioned in place of Abul-Faraj. At all events the story seems to be apocryphal.

'Qasideh' which he wanted to present to the king. Abul-Faraj wanted him to recite it, but Anwari replied that he would recite only the beginning couplet, which was this—

زهی شاه و زهی شاه و زهی شاه : زهی میر و زهی میر و زهی میر

"What a king! what a king! what a king!

What a noble! what a noble! what a noble!"

Abul-Faraj laughed and said, "Why don't you say in the second line—

زهی ماه و زهی ماه و زهی ماه :

(What a moon! what a moon! what a moon!)? That would rhyme with the first verse while your line does not." "Oh no," said Anwari, "that will not do. You know a king and his ameeers are inseparably connected."

Abul-Faraj thinking that the man might do for a buffoon at the royal court, promised to present him to the king next day, and asked him to be in attendance at the door of the royal palace at the appointed time. Anwari was punctual at the time and was admitted, but Abul-Faraj was surprised to see him in a decent garb—one quite different from that worn on the previous day. The new poet was however presented to the king, and was given permission to recite the Qasideh. Accordingly he commenced with the beautiful lines mentioned above—not the nonsensical verses with which he had hoodwinked his rival—and, after a few lines, paused. Then turning to Abul-Faraj he said, "This is the beginning of my poem; if the poem is yours, please recite the lines that follow; if it is not, allow me to proceed with the poem." Abul-Faraj was confused, and of course disclaimed the authorship of the poem; so Anwari recited it to the end.

The Sultan and his court were charmed with the elegance of the piece; and Abul-Faraj from that day lost the favour of the Sultan.

35. The poet Násir Bokhári, while going on a pilgrimage to Meccah, encountered the celebrated poet Salmán Sáveji in Baghdad. The latter was at the time taking a walk by the banks of the Tigris, and Násir was introduced to him by a mutual friend. After a slight conversation on ordinary topics, Salmán, in order to test the poetic powers of his new acquaintance, uttered the following line on the Tigris, as the river was at that time very turbulent:—

دجله را امسال رفتاری عجب مستانه است :

"This year the Tigris floweth with strange frenzy."

And Salmán desired Násir to complete the couplet. Násir immediately replied—

یای در زنجیر و کف بر لب مگر دیوانه است :

“It has fettered limbs and foaming mouth—perhaps it has gone mad.”

Salmán was pleased with the reply, and embracing him, took him home as a guest.

36. The poet Makhfee of Geilán was a very jovial fellow, but addicted to opium, in consequence of which he was very lean.

A friend once tried to dissuade him from taking so much opium, saying “You see your habit has made you a skeleton and brought you nigh to death’s door.” “Oh, no,” said Makhfee, “it is not the fault of opium at all. You know, whenever any book is published, there is always to be seen in it, in some passage or other, the sentence—‘Let Makhfee* remain no longer’; and it is to these ill-wishes that my present condition is due.”

37. A person once asked the poet Mirzâ Bidel why he had not written any verses in praise of God. Bidel replied—

ییش ازین گفت سعدی شیراز : بیدل از بی نشان چه گوید باز

“The poet S’adi of Shiraz has long since said, ‘What can one† who has lost one’s heart say of One who has no form?’”

38. One day the poets Faizi and ‘Urfi were strolling in a garden, when they saw a beautiful damsel, whose locks were waving in the breeze. Hereupon Faizi gave utterance to the following line :—

ای صبا آن زلف را بر چهره زیباش نه :

“O breeze, lay those ringlets on her pretty cheeks.”

‘Urfi with equal readiness completed the couplet, with this line—

آنچه بی رخصت ز جا برداشتی بر جاش نه :

“Put back in its place what thou didst take up without permission.”

* A punning perversion of the meaning of the phrase of frequent occurrence in Persian books—*نماز مخفی* i.e., ‘Let it not be concealed (from our readers).’

† The italics are a translation of the word ‘Bidel,’ which was also the poet’s name.

39. A writer, called Ameena, who was entrusted with the transcribing of the 'Deewán' of the poet Ázaree of Toos, took such liberty with the original, and added so many interpolations of his own, that the offended poet wrote the following verses about him:—

دیوانِ بنده را که امینا سواد کرد : تنها درو نه شعر مجرد نوشته است
از نظم و نثر هرچه بطبعش خوش آمده : دیوانِ بنده پر ز خوشامد نوشته است
هرجا که لفظِ بد مثلاً دید در سخن : دستِ تصرفش همه را بد نوشته است
اکنون شریکِ مہترِ دیوانِ بنده اوست : زیرا که بیشتر سخن خود نوشته است

"In my Deewán, which Ameena undertook to transcribe, he has incorporated not verses merely, but whatsoever of Prose and Verse pleased his fancy. Again, wherever I had written the word *بد* (hand), his misappropriating hand has changed it to *بد* (bad). So, now, he is the principal collaborator of my Deewán, since his interpolations fill most part of the book."

40. When Khwajeh Yahia Keráli became the chief of the tribe of Sarbadarán, Sultan Tugha Timoor wrote to him to come to the court to pay homage. The Khwajeh refused, on various pretexts. The Sultan, hereupon, wrote again, sending him the following verses:—

کردن به جفای زمانرا و سرمکش : کارِ بزرگ را توان داشت مختصر
سیمرغ وار چون توان کرد قصیدِ قاف : چون صعوه خورد باش و فروگیر بال و پر
بهرن کف از دماغ خیالِ محال را : تا در سرِ سرت زود صد هزار سر

"Submit to the necessities of cruel Fate, and do not be headstrong. Great actions cannot be brought within a narrow scope. If thou canst not soar like the Seimurgh to the heights of the Caucasus, be thou small like the sparrow, and fold up thy wings and feathers. Drive out vain aspirations from thy head, lest thy infatuation cause a hundred thousand heads to fall."

The Khwajeh sent the following reply, in the same tone:—

کردت چرا نهیم جفای زمانه را : راضی چرا شویم بهر کارِ مختصر
دربا و کوه را بگذاریم و بگذریم : سیمرغ وار زیر پر آریم بحر و بر
یا بر مراد برسرِ کردوت نهیم پای : یا مرد وار بر سرِ همت دهیم سر

"Why should we submit to cruel Destiny, and why should we be content with little actions? We will traverse oceans and cross mountains, and like the Seimurgh bring the lands and seas beneath our feet. Either we shall succeed in putting our feet on the neck of the revolving sky, or, we will manfully give our heads in attaining our object."

As a sequel, it may be added that Sultan Tugha Timoor was killed at the hands of the Khwajeh.

41. Malik Muzaffar-ud-din, ruler of Fars, sent the following lines to the poet Kamâl-ud-din Ismail of Isphahan:—

چون نیست مرا بخدمت راهِ وصال : سر بر خطِ دیوانِ تو دارم مه و سال
گفتم فلکا در تو چه نقصات آید : کر زانکه رسانیم زمانی بکمال

"Since I have not the opportunity of waiting on thee, I keep my head all the year round on the threshold of thy *Court*. I said to the revolving sky, 'What harm would it be to thee, if thou, for once, wert to take me to *Perfection*?' "

[Here there is a pun in the second line which means also—"I am absorbed, all the year round, in the lines of thy book of poems." Similarly, the last word in the last line, meaning 'Perfection', is an abbreviation of the poet's name—'Kamâl.']

To this the poet sent the following reply:—

آنی تو که خورشید سرافگنده تست : هر کوست خداوندِ هنرِ بنده تست
جویای کالند بجاتِ اهلِ هنر : وان گاه بجاتِ کمالِ جوینده تست

"Thou art that one before whom the Sun feels humbled; who-soever is master of accomplishments is a slave of thine. Men of talents are with all their heart in quest of 'Perfection', but 'Perfection' itself is heart and soul in quest of thee!"

[Here, too, there is a pun on the poet's name in the last verse.]

42. The poet Adīb Sâbir (the name Sâbir signifying 'endowed with patience') sent the following lines to the poet Futoohi (the name signifying 'endowed with plenty', or 'blessed') of Merw:—

فتوحی ز دیدارِ جاتِ پرورت : فرون شد یکی جانِ نو در تنم
اگر نه فتوحی توئی در جهان : چو روی تو دیدم فتوحی منم

"O Futoohi, the soul-nourishing interview with thee hath put new life into my body. Were it not that in this world Futoohi art thou, it is I that am now Futoohi [blessed] after seeing thee!"

Futoohi sent the following complimentary reply:—

زهی نظم و نثر تو کرده فزون : خرد در دماغم روان در تنم
چو بشکیم از خدمت تو همی : تو صابر نیی بلکه صابر منم

"O thou whose verse and prose have strengthened the intellect in my brain and the soul in my body, if I can bear patiently the separation from thee, it is not thou that art Sâbir ['endowed with patience'] but it is I."

43. Sultân Behramshâh ordered some prisoners taken in a battle to be put to death. Among them was one Syed Ashraf-ud-din Hasan (son of the poet Nâsir Ilwi), who said to the officers in charge that he had some important communication to make to the Sultan. On being taken to the king, he prostrated himself before him, and addressed him in these verses:—

آنی که فلک پیش تیغ ناید : بخشش بجز از کف چو میغت ناید
زخم تو که بیل کوه بیکر نکشد : بر پشه همی زنی دریغت ناید

"Thou art one whose sword even the sky cannot withstand. Except from thy palm, which is like the rain-cloud, munificence comes not. Thy blow, whose force even the mountain-like elephant cannot bear, thou strikest on a gnat—feelest thou no pity?"

The Sultan was pleased. He spared the lives of the prisoners, and made the Syed one of his courtiers.

44. The wine-jug of the poet Omar Khaiyâm was once upset by accident and broken; the contents were spilled on the floor. The poet was incensed against Fate that had deprived him of his enjoyment, and in the heat of the moment addressed the following lines to God:—

ایرین می مرا شکستی ربی : بر من در عیش را بیستی ربی
بر خاک فکندی می گلگون مرا : خاکم بدهن مگر تو مستی ربی

"Thou hast broken my wine-jug, Lord! and hast closed on me the door of enjoyment, Lord! My rosy wine Thou hast spilt on the ground—may my mouth be full of dust for saying so, but, me seems Thou art intoxicated, Lord!"

It is said that the poet immediately felt some choking sensation in the throat, which terrified him. He forthwith gave utterance to the following lines,* whereupon he felt relief:—

نا کرده گناه در جهان کیست بگو : وان کس که گشته نکرد چون زیست بگو
من بد کنم و تو بد مکافات دمی : پس فرق میان من و تو چیست بگو

“In this world who is he that has not committed a sin? Say Thou. And how lived he who committed no sin? Say Thou. Evil I do, and with evil Thou requitest it—what then is the difference between me and Thee? Say Thou!”

45. The poet Ghazālī, whose native place was Mashhad (sacred to the memory of Imām Ali Moosa Rezá) went to the Deccan (India) to seek his fortune, but he was not much appreciated there. He, therefore, went to Jaunpur on the invitation of Khan Zaman Ali Kuli Khan, governor of that province. The letter of invitation, which was accompanied with a present of one thousand Rupees, contained these lines:—

ای غزالی بحق شاه نجف : که سوی بندگان بیچون آی
چون که بی قدر گشته آنجا : سر خود گیر و زود بیرون آی

“O Ghazālī, I conjure thee in the name of the Shah of Najaf (i.e., Ali) to come towards us who are the devotees of the Matchless (God). As thou art not appreciated in that place, *follow thy bent* and come out soon.”

The words سر خود گیر (‘follow thy bent’) have another and a deeper meaning. Literally they signify ‘Take thine own head,’ which refers to the top letter of the name غزالی, viz., the letter غ. The value of غ in the اَبجد notation is one thousand, and the reference is to the thousand rupees sent as a present along with the letter.

46. The poet Faizi was very fond of dogs, although they are an abomination to the orthodox Moslem, of which type was the poet Urfi. Once when the latter called on Faizi, he saw there some puppies with gold collars round their necks. He asked by way of joke—

مخدوم زاده به چه اسم موسوم اند :

“By what name have been named these offspring of my lord?” Faizi replied, اسم عرفی “The common (or usual) name” or “the

* These lines are also attributed to the poet عراقی.

name 'Urfi'." Hereupon Urfi instantly retorted مبارك باشد "Be it auspicious!" or "Be it 'Mubàrak'" which was the name of Faizi's father.

47. The poet Sâib was clever in improvising verses. Once in an assembly of poets he was given the following hemistich, and was told to complete the sense by either prefixing or suffixing another hemistich:—

شمع اگر خاموش باشد آتش از مینا گرفت :

'If the candle be put out take fire from the bottle.'

He immediately prefixed—

امشب از ساقی چو بس گرم ست محفل می توان :

so that the whole couplet means:

"To-night, owing to the cup-bearer, there is such warmth in the festive assembly, that it is possible, if the candle be put out, to take fire from the bottle."

48. On another occasion Sâib was given the following verse to complete:

سگ نشسته ز استاده سر بلند تو است :

"A dog sitting has his head higher than when standing," which the poet did by prefixing—

شود ز گوشه نشینی فروز رعوت خلق :

"Sitting in a corner develops the refinement of disposition, 'just as a dog when sitting has his head higher than when standing'."

49. When the fame of Sâib as a maker of extempore verses spread throughout the literary world, Khwâjah Abul Hasan Zafar Khan sent for some poets and asked them to compose a line which it would be hard to embody in a couplet. They produced the following line:—

دویدن رفتن استادن نشستن خفتن و مردن :

'Running, walking, standing, sitting, sleeping and dying.'

The Khwâjah then sent for Sâib and asked him to make a couplet embodying the above line. This the poet accomplished by prefixing—

بقدر هر سکون راحت بود بگر تفاوت را :

“There is comfort whenever any state is changed to another of comparative rest—see the difference between ‘running, walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, and dying.’”

All present were astonished at this quick and apt response, and the Khwâjah gave the poet a very handsome reward.

50. The poets Hâkim of Lahore and Khân Ârzoo were good friends.

Once Hâkim wrote a Ghazal of which the concluding lines were:

گر چنین از فیضِ خانِ آرزو گیرد نیک
طرفه شوری این غزل حاکمِ بلاهور افکند

“If this Ghazal were to take salt (*i.e.*, borrow elegance) from the *tray** of Arzoo, it would, O Hâkim, cause rare commotion† in Lahore.”

Khân Arzoo replied:

نیست شعرِ آرزو را رتبهٔ : گر تو با این هم پسندی حاکمی

“The verse of Arzoo does not hold any high rank, but if in spite of this you like it, *you may please yourself*.”‡

51. The Sultan of Turkey once wrote to Shah Jâhân, (whose appellation literally means ‘the king of the world’)—“You are ruler over Hindustan only; why do you call yourself ‘king of the world’? Better change your name.” When the letter was received none of the Indian courtiers could suggest an appropriate answer. The poet Abu Tâlib Kalim was sent for. He hit upon the following reply, which was approved of by all:—

هند و جهان ز روی عدد چون برابر است :
بر ما خطابِ شاهِ جهانِ ذاتِ مقرر است :

“As in numerical value India and the world are both equal, (*i. e.*, as هند and جهان are both equal to 59 by the *abjad* notation), to us has been assigned the title of ‘The King of the World’.”

52. The poet Kalim was not in the good graces of Noor Jâhân who used to find fault with his verses now and then. Once he wrote the following lines, and challenged criticism in respect of them:—

ز شرم آب شدم کاب را شکستی نیست : بدحیرتم که مرا روزگار چون بشکست

“From shame I became water, and though water is not a thing, breakable, I wonder how fortune could break me?”

* A pun on the name ‘Khân.’

† A pun on the word شوری which means also ‘saltishness.’

‡ A pun on the word حاکمی which also means ‘you are Hâkim.’

Noor Jahân when she received the lines, at once wrote back—
 بخت بست و شکست "water became ice and was broken."

Poor Kalim was considerably crestfallen, and did not put in his appearance at Court for some days.

53. Jahân Ârâ Begum, daughter of Shah Jahân, was once promenading in a garden, with her face veiled. The poet Saidi (صدی) of Tehran, concealed in a balcony, watched her, and when she came near the place where he was, exclaimed:—

برقع برخ افکنده برد ناز بیاغش : تا نگهت گل بیخته آید بدماغش

"Delicacy takes her to the garden with face veiled, so that the perfume of the Rose be filtered ere it reach her brain."

The Begum had the poet sent for, and gave him rupees five thousand for his verse, but banished him from the city for having ventured to look upon her.

54. Amir Moizzi was the poet laureate of Sultan Malikshah, and the incident to which the poet owed his *nom-de-plume* happened in this way:

One evening, on the eve of the festival of the Eid, the Sultan, bow in hand, went up to the terrace to look for the new moon. He was the first to see the moon and was highly pleased thereat. He ordered the poet who was present to say something appropriate to the occasion, whereupon the latter recited these verses:

ای ماه کجای شهر یاری کوئی : یا ابروی آن طرزه نگاری کوئی
 نعلی زده از زری عیاری کوئی : در کوش سپهر گوشواری کوئی

"O moon, art thou the Bow of the King? Or the eyebrow of that rare Beauty? Or art thou a horse-shoe fashioned from the purest gold? Or art thou the ear-ring in the ear of the heavens?"

The Sultan was pleased, and gave him as a reward one of his favourite horses, whereupon the poet gave vent to his feelings in the following lines:—

چون آتش خاطر مرا شاه بدید : از خاک مرا بر زیر ماه کشید
 چون آب یکی ترانه از من بشنید : چون باد یکی مرکب خصم بخشید

"When the king saw the *fire* of my heart he raised me from the *earth* to a higher plane than the moon's. He heard from me a quatrain fluent like *water*, and presented me with his favourite horse swift as the *wind*."

The verses, each line of which contains the name of an element, charmed the king, who bestowed a thousand dinars on the poet, and suggested his taking as his *nom-de-plume* 'Mo'izzi,' a name derived from his own, *Mo'iz-ud-din*.

55. A nobleman had an accident which deprived him of two of his teeth. This was to him the cause of much vexation, which when a poet observed, he addressed to him these lines:—

طی کرد فلک جلهٔ عالم یکسر : می جست برای گوش خورشید دُر
چون جنسِ نفیس خواست نامد بکفش : از حقهٔ یاقوت تو برد این دو گهر

"The revolving sphere traversed the whole Universe from end to end, in search of pearls for the ear of the Sun. As it wanted a very precious substance and could not get it, it carried away these two pearls from thy ruby casket."

The Amir was delighted, and bestowed on the poet a considerable sum of money.

56. The poet Rukn Sâyen was, for some fault, put in irons, by Tughân Timoor Khân. One day he managed to present himself before the Khân, with fetters on, and craved mercy. The Khân so far relented as to promise to release him if he said some fine verses appropriate to the occasion. The poet thereupon gave utterance to the following lines extempore:—

در خدمتِ شاه چون قوی شد رایم : گفتم که رکاب را ز زر فرمایم
آهن چو شنید این سخن از دهنم : در تاب فتاد و حلقه زد در یایم

"In the service of the king when my judgment became ripe, I said I would have stirrups made of Gold. When Iron heard these words from my mouth, it fell into agitation, and coiled itself round my legs."

The verses so pleased the Khân that he not only fulfilled his promise but rewarded the poet.

57. The poet Hilâlî on the completion of his poem received from Badi'uz-zamân Mirza, with other presents, a handsome slave, whereupon Mulla Haidar Kulooj wrote the following lines and sent them to the prince:—

شها کامگارا پی خادمانت : فرستاده شد زین دعاگویامی
هلالی غلامی طلب کرد دادی : مرا هم بده چون هلالی غلامی

"O all-powerful king, through thy servants this well-wisher of thine (*i.e.*, myself) had forwarded a petition. Hilâli asked for a slave, and this thou gavest; give me too a slave like Hilâli."

The sting lies in the final words which have a double meaning: (1) 'a slave as you gave to Hilâli,' and (2) 'a slave *like* Hilâli.'

58. Once Sheikh Muhammad Sa'id Quraishi wanted to go to the emperor Shah Jahân, but as the latter was in the bath the Sheikh was refused admittance by the officer of the bath, who was of the sect of Chelâs. This incensed the Sheikh, who forthwith indited the following quatrain, and sent it to the king:—

ای شاه جناب تو جنابِ الله است :: هر حکم تو چون حکمِ کتابِ الله است
این چیلۀ دیو فعلِ مناعِ درت :: ابلیس صفتِ مانعِ بابِ الله است

"O king thy court is like the Court-of-God, and every order of thine is like the injunction of the Book-of-God. This fiend-like Chelâ, who keeps off men from thy door, is like Satan, the preventer of access to the Door-of-God."

The verses amused Shah Jahân, who ordered that in future the Sheikh was to be admitted to all parts of the palace excepting only the harem.

59. The poet Salmân Sâvaji once presented himself before Amir Sheikh Hasan, ruler of Baghdad, whilst the latter was practising archery. A slave named Sa'âdat (meaning 'Good Fortune') was engaged in collecting the discharged arrows and again presenting them to the prince. The Amir on seeing Salmân asked him to make some verses befitting the occasion, and the poet, readily complying with the prince's wish, recited the following verses:—

چو در جوفِ چلچلی کان رفت شاه :: تو گوئی که در برجِ قوس است ماه
دو زاغِ کات با عقابِ سه پر :: بدیدم به یک گوشه آورده سر
نهادند سر بر سرِ دوشِ شاه :: ندانم چه گفتند در گوشِ شاه
چو از شست بکشاد خسرو کمره :: بر آمد زهر گوشه آوازِ زه
شها تیر در بندِ تدبیرِ تست :: سعادتِ دوان در پیِ تیرِ تست
بمهدت زکس نالۀ بر نخاست :: بغیر از کان کو بنالد رواست
که در عهدِ سلطانِ صاحبِ قران :: نکردست کس زور جز بر کات

"When the king entered the cavity of the Châchi bow, he looked like the moon in the Zodiacal Sign of the Bow.⁽¹⁾ I saw the two crows ⁽²⁾ of the bow and the triple-winged eagle ⁽³⁾ consulting together ⁽⁴⁾ in a corner. They placed their hands on the shoulder of the king, but I know not what tale they whispered in his ear. When the king let go the grip from the thumbstall, there arose from every corner the sound of 'Bravo'!⁽⁵⁾ O king, the planet Mercury ⁽⁶⁾ attends upon thy Resolve, and Good Fortune ⁽⁷⁾ runs after thy arrows. In thy reign there is no plaint from anyone except from the Bow, whose moaning is but just, because in the reign of the auspicious King none useth force except upon the Bow."

60. The poets Asmat and Khwâjoo Kermani were rivals for the royal favour, and ever jealous of each other. This the King knew well, and occasionally amused himself by pitting them against each other. Once, when the King and Asmat were in a festive assembly, Khwâjoo came up, whereupon the King, turning to Asmat, said, "Lo! your friend comes. Have you no kind greeting for him?" Asmat seized the opportunity to vent his spleen in the following lines:—

خواجو نگر خواجو نگر خواجو ز کرمان آمده
کرمان ز گنه بیرون شوند این گنه ز کرمان آمده

"Look at Khwâjoo! Look at Khwâjoo! Khwâjoo comes from Kermân. Worms are begotten of dung, but this dung is begotten of worms!"

[Here there is a play on the word کرمان which is the name of a town, and also means 'worms.']

61. Once the poet Rashîd Watwât called upon the poet Adib Sâbir on a day when it was snowing. The latter, who did not want to be disturbed at the time, instructed his servant to say that he was not at home. Rashîd was annoyed, and exclaimed:—

آن کس که برون رود درین روز : کودت ترازو دگر کسی نیست

"Than he who goeth out on such a day no greater blockhead can be found."

Sâbir, on hearing this, put out his head from a window, and retorted:—

من خود بجرم سرای خویشم : پیداست که از برون در کیست

(1) *Sagittarius*. (2) A technical name for the two corners or ends of the bow. (3) The arrow with three feathers. (4) Literally, 'laying their heads together.' (5) A pun on the word زه which means 'a Bowstring' as well as 'Bravo!' (6) A pun on the word تیر which means 'an arrow,' as well as 'the planet Mercury' regarded as the Secretary of the Heavens. (7) A pun on the slave's name.

"I myself am inside the harem of my house. It is evident who it is that is outside the door."

62. Two brothers, Salâmi,* and Kalâmi,† once wrote a panegyric poem, of indifferent merit, in honour of Wazir Mahammad Sharif Hijri of Ispahân, and frequented his audience-chamber in the hope of a substantial reward. This bored the Wazir, who at last dismissed them with a small present, and the following lines:—

دو چیزست بدتر ز تیغِ حرامی : کلامِ سلامی سلامِ کلامی

"There are two things that are worse than the sword of an assassin—the verse of Salâmi, and the salute of Kalâmi."

63. Once some poets wrote verses lampooning Shah Na'amat-Allah Khân, ruler of Yezd. When the latter came to know of this, he had the poets brought before him, and gave orders for their punishment. The poet Kiswatî, who was of the number, hereupon addressed him in these lines:—

شاه از خانه از پیرایندایِ شاعران : بیرون میا که شهرهٔ ایام می شوی
ما هجو می کنیم و تو ایند چه فائده : ما کشته می شویم و تو بدنام می شوی

"O King, come not forth from thy house to injure the poets, lest thou become notorious in the world. We satirise thee, and thou harmest us—what benefit to thee in this? We shall be killed, but thou wilt bear ignominy for ever."

This so much pleased the ruler that he dismissed the poets with presents.

64. The poet Shâpoor Naishâpoori wanted to enlist in the service of Khwâjah Nooruddin, Wazir of Sultan Jalâl-ud-din Mahammad Khwârizm-Shah, but for five consecutive days he could get no admittance to the high personage, being told every time that the Khwâjah was in his cups. At last, when he called for the sixth time, the Khwâjah was informed of his persistence. He sent word, that if the poet could submit some verses appropriate to the occasion, he would be admitted. The poet wrote down on a piece of paper the following lines, and sent them in:—

فضل تو و این باده یرستی باهم : مانند بلندى است و پستی باهم
حال تو بچشمِ ماهرویات مانند : کانتجاست مدام نور و مستی باهم

"The union of thine excellence with this wine-worship is like that of height with depth. Thy condition is like that of Beauty's eyes, wherein are always blended light and intoxication."

* Meaning "one expert in greeting."

† Meaning "one expert in the use of words."

These so pleased the Wazir that he became the poet's patron thereafter.

65. This is how the poet Abdur Rizzâq Ispahâni solicits horse-allowance from his patron:—

صایم الدھر اسپکی دارم : کہ بدہ روز روزہ بکشاید
در رکوعست سال و مه لیکن : کہ گہی در سجود افزاید
یارہ کاه آرزو کردست : مدق رفت و بر نمی آید
روز عیدست و ہر کسی امروز : بہ طعامی دہن بیالاید
گر تفضل کند خداوندم : یارہ کاه و جو بفرماید
ورنہ رخصت دہد کہ اندر شرع : روزہ عید داشتن شاید

"I have a poor horse, who is renowned throughout the world for fasting, since he breaks his fast every ten days. All the year round he keeps his head bowed in prayer, and at times takes to genuflexion. He has been yearning for a morsel of hay, but for a long time he has not been able to get it. To-day is the day of Eid, when every mouth doth taste of food. Let my lord be gracious enough to order the supply of a bit of hay and barley, or let him decree that fasting is incumbent on the day of Eid!"

66. Moulana Sultân Mahommad composed a couplet in the form of a palindrome, (*i.e.*, a verse that reads the same backwards as forwards), and he recited it at the dinner-table of the ruler of Samarcand. The latter jestingly observed that as the Moulana was fond of palindromes, he should be served with such dishes only as had names forming a palindrome, and that as only bread came under that category, (the Persian word for bread, *viz.*, نان reading both ways the same), he should be served with bread only. The Moulana quickly retorted: "Not only نان (bread) but *ہمہ* (everything) is a palindrome, and I should therefore have *everything!*" The ruler was so very pleased with the reply that he gave orders for everything on the table to be presented to the poet, and the value of the gold and silver articles so presented amounted to a considerable sum.

67. When Pahlawân Mahmood was on his death bed, one of the people present, a wiseacre, said to him, "Tell me if there is any wish of thine unfulfilled, so that I may try to bring it about."

Pahlawân murmured the following verses extempore:—

چہ یرسی چہ بایدت وقتِ مرگ : بجز وصلِ جانان نمی بایدم
جدائی مبادا مرا از خدا : ذکر ہر چہ بیش آیدم شایدم

“What askest thou of me at the time of death, if I have any desire? I want nothing but union with the Divine Beloved. Let not separation from God befall me—whatever else happeneth to me, would be fitting.”

68. When the poet Nizām Astarābādi died, one of his brothers sent the following lines to the poet's patron Khwājah Saif-ud-din, requesting a commemorative stone to be placed on his grave:—

شهریارا نظام سحر کلام : داشت در دل بسی محبت تو
از چه رومانده خاکِ او بی سنگ : عجبم آید از مرورت تو
در زمانِ حیاتِ خود نکشید : منت از دیگران بدولت تو
در زمانِ وفات هم آن به : که بود زیر بارِ منت تو

“O king, Nizām of enchanting words loved thee very much. How is it that his dust remains without a stone? I am surprised at thy sense of what is due. When he was alive, owing to thy favour he never had to go under the obligation of others; now that he is dead, it is but fitting that he should still be under the burden of thy obligation.”

69. The poet Bāqar Khurdah wrote a poem in praise of Sultan Ibrahim Adilshah of Deccan, but received no reward. Another poet Zahoori Khorāsāni, shortly after, received good meed for his eulogy. This stirred up the bile of Bāqar, who sent to the king the following lines, which are said to have produced the desired effect:—

خوارند دوجا بدر اربابِ سخن : نزدِ شه غزنین و شهنشاهِ دکن
بی حاصله بردند ظهوری و حسن : بی جایزه ماند شعرِ فردوسی و من

“Men of letters have had sorry treatment at two places in this world—in the court of the King of Ghaznin* and in that of the King of the Deccan. Without merit did Zahoori and Hasan† receive reward; without recompense remained the verse of Firdausi and myself.”

* Sultan Mahmood Ghaznavi, the patron of Firdausi.

† Khwajah Hasan Maimandi, wazir of the above and a secret enemy of Firdausi.

PARODY AND BURLESQUE

—:O:—

The poet Abu-Ishâq was a gourmand, and in his poems, mostly devoted to the pleasures of the table, he has burlesqued the lines of Hâfiz, Sa'adi, and other celebrated poets. A selection from his verses is given below.

Lines of Hâfiz.

Lines of Abu-Ishâq.

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>آنان که خاکرا بنظر کیمیا کنند
آیا بود که گوشه چشمی بها کنند</p> | 1 | { | <p>کیا بزبان سحر که سر کله وا کنند
آیا بود که گوشه چشمی بها کنند</p> |
| <p>ترك عاشق كُش مامست برون رفت امروز
تا كرا خون دل از دیده روان خواهد بود</p> | 2 | { | <p>مطبیعی باز یاز از چپته قبه خرید
تا دگر آب ز چشم که روان خواهد بود</p> |
| <p>گوشه گیری و سلامت هوسم بود ولی
فتنه میکند آن نرگس فتان که مپرس</p> | 3 | { | <p>روژه داری و قناعت هوسم هست ولی
چشمکی میزند آن بره بریان که مپرس</p> |
| <p>کس با مید وفا ترك دل و دین مکناد
که چنانم من ازیں کرده بشیمان که مپرس</p> | 4 | { | <p>کس بیالای مزعفر مکناد آتش ترش
که چنانم من ازیں کرده بشیمان که مپرس</p> |

Will it ever be that those,
who can transmute dust into
gold by looking at it, will give
a sidelong glance at us ?

1

Will it be that those who
sell cooked sheep's head will
give us a sidelong glance, when
they open their pots in the
morning ?

Our beloved Turk, who is
the cause of death to her lovers,
has to-day gone out intoxica-
ted. Let us see now from
whose eyes the heart's blood
begins to flow.

2

The cook has again pur-
chased onions for giving a
relish to minced meat. Let
us see now from whose eyes
tears begin to flow.

I had a yearning for seclu-
sion and peace. But Oh! the
witchery of those narcissus-
like eyes!—the commotion
they cause in me is indescrib-
able.

3

I have a longing for moder-
ation and for keeping fasts.
But Oh! in what a tempting
way doth the roasted lamb
wink at me!

Let no one surrender his
heart and religion in the hope
of faithfulness from his
sweetheart. My having done
so is the cause of infinite
regret to me.

4

No one should partake of
Sauce along with 'Muza'affar'
(i.e., sweetened rice coloured
with saffron); for my hav-
ing done so is the cause of
infinite regret to me.

Lines of Hâfiz.

آن دم که دل بعشق دهی خوشدمی بود
 در کارِ خیر حاجتِ هیچ استخاره نیست
 مقامِ امن و میِ بیغش و رفیقِ شفیق
 گرت مدام میسر شود زهی توفیق
 جهان و کارِ جهان جمله هیچ در هیچ است
 هزار بار من این نکته کرده ام تحقیق
 خلوتی که ترا در چه زنجند است
 بکنه او نرسد صد هزار فکرِ عمیق

Blessed is the moment when
 you give your heart to Love;
 no need is there for divination
 in doing a good deed.

A place of security, wine
 unalloyed, and a kind friend—
 if these to thee be always
 attainable, Oh the Divine
 Grace!

The world and the affairs
 of the world are all void
 within void; a thousand times
 have I verified this maxim.

The sweetness that thou
 hast in the well of thy chin
 is such that a hundred thou-
 sand intellects profound can-
 not attain the comprehension
 thereof.

Lines of Abu-Ishâq.

در کارِ خیر حاجتِ هیچ استخاره نیست
 اِهمال در تناولِ فرنی چرا کنید
 برنجِ زردِ پر از روغنِ ای رفیقِ شفیق
 اگر جلوه بود هم برش زهی توفیق
 بغیرِ قلبه برنجِ این طعامها هیچ است
 هزار بار من این نکته کرده ام تحقیق
 چنان فرو برم انگشتها بقعرِ برنج
 که عقلِ خیره بماند در آن مقامِ عمیق

No need is there for divination
 in doing a good deed!
 Why then do you delay in
 partaking of the porridge?

O for a dish of saffron-sea-
 soned rice, full of butter; O
 kind friend! And what
 Divine Grace if gravy also
 be thereon!

In the absence of the *pilaw*
 [i.e., rice cooked with butter,
 meat and spices] all these
 dishes are as nothing; a thou-
 sand times have I verified
 this maxim!

So deep I plunge my fingers
 in the bowl of rice, that wit
 is left bewildered in that
 depth profound!

7

Lines of Hâfiz.

اگر آن ترکِ شیرازی بدست آرد دلِ ما را
 بخالِ هندویش بخشم سرقند و بخارا را
 ز عشقِ ناتمامِ ما جالِ یارِ مستغنی ست
 به آب و رنگ و خال و خطِ چه حاجت رویِ زیارا

- فتان کین لولیان شوخ شیرین کارِ شهر آشوب :
 چنان بردند صبر از دل که ترکان خوانِ یغما را :
 من از آن حسنِ روز افزون که یوسف داشت دانستم :
 که عشق از پردهٔ عصمت برون آرد زلیخا را :
 غزل گفستی و دُر سفتی یا و خوش بخوان حافظ :
 که بر نظمِ تو افشاند فلک عقدهٔ ثریا را :

7

Lines of Abu-Ishâq.

- بیشم گر خراسانی گذارد صحنِ بُغرا را :
 ببویِ قلیه اش بخشم سرفروشد و بخارا را :
 چه آرائی بمشک و زعفران رخسارِ فالوده :
 بآب و رنگ و خال و خط چه حاجت رویِ زیبا را :
 جالِ برّهٔ بریان و حسنِ دنبهٔ کشکک :
 چنان بردند صبر از دل که ترکان خوانِ یغما را :
 من از آن بویِ روح افزا که کتّادست دانستم :
 که زود از پردهٔ عصمت برون آرد زلیخا را :
 بگو اسحاق وصفِ خوشهٔ انگورِ مثقالی :
 که بر نظمِ تو افشاند فلک عقدهٔ ثریا را :

Lines of Hâfiz.

If that winsome lass of Shiraz
 were to accept my heart, for
 the black mole on her cheek I
 would bestow Samarcand and
 Bokhara.

The beauty of our Beloved is
 independent of our imperfect
 love; what need hath Beauty's
 face for shine, and rouge, and
 mole, and paint?

Lines of Abu-Ishâq.

If a Khurâsâni were to lay
 before me a plate of *Bughrâ*,*
 in recompense for the savour of
 its fried meat I would bestow on
 him Samarcand and Bokhara.

Why garnishest thou with
 musk and saffron the face of
 the *Faloodah*?† What need
 hath Beauty's face for shine,
 and rouge, and mole, and paint?

* A kind of soup in the preparation of which the people of Khorâsân are expert.

† A well-known sweet dish, somewhat like vermicelli porridge.

Lines of Hâfiz.

Alas! these nymphs, roguish and charming, who are the cause of commotion in cities by their loveliness, have robbed us of our patience, in the manner of the Turks carrying off booty.

From the daily-increasing beauty, with which Joseph was endowed, I came to know that Love can draw out Zuleikha from the curtain of modesty.

Hâfiz! thou hast composed a ghazal—nay, thou hast strung pearls. Come, sing it sweetly, so that the heavens may sprinkle on thy verse the cluster of the Pleiades.

Lines of Sa'adi.

بکمند سر زلفت نه من افتادم و بس
که به هر حلقه آن دام گرفتاری هست
باد خاکی ز مقام تو بیاورد و ببرد
آب هر طیب که در طبله عطاری هست

Not I alone have become entangled in the meshes of thy ringlets, but there is a captive held in every curl thereof.

The breeze brought a pinch of dust from thy abode, and lo! it put to shame every scent on the perfumer's shelf.

Lines of Abu-Ishâq.

The beauty of the roast lamb and the charm of the sheep's tail cooked in curds have despoiled me of my patience in the manner of the Turks carrying off booty.

On account of the soul-exhilarating fragrance that the pigeon-pie has, I now can understand that it can incontinently draw forth Zuleikha from her curtain of modesty.

Ishâq! recite thou the praises of the Miscâlî* grapes, so that on thy verses the heavens may sprinkle the cluster of the Pleiades.

Lines of Abu-Ishâq.

هوس رشته قطایف دل من دارد و بس
که بهر حلقه آن دام گرفتاری هست
باد بوی سحر آورد ز کیای و ببرد
آب هر طیب که در طبله عطاری هست

My heart is full of yearning for the filaments of the *Qatâif*,† in each alluring coil whereof there is a captive held.

The breeze brought the morning fragrance of the sheep's trotters, and lo! it put to shame every scent on the perfumer's shelf.

* A species of grapes of large size, each weighing about a *miscâl* (a dram and a half), whence the name.

† A sweetmeat made from almonds, and in the form of coils of thread.

شکم پر ز حلوا و بریان نکوست } 9 { تواضع ز گردن فرازان نکوست
 عدس گر شکم پر کند خوی اوست } گداگر تواضع کند خوی اوست

Humility is graceful if } It is good to have the
 shown by the exalted in rank; } stomach filled with pudding
 if a beggar shows humility, } and roast-meat; if the lentils
 it is but his habit. } 9 { make the belly full, it is but
 their nature.

10

Lines of Khâqânî.

بس از سی سال این معنی محقق شد بخاقانی
 که سلطانیست درویشی و درویشیست سلطانی

After thirty years Khâqânî realised the fact that sovereignty is a kind of beggary, and beggary is sovereignty.

10

Lines of Abu-Ishâq.

بس از سی سال بو اسحاق شد تحقیق این معنی
 که بورانیست بادنجان و بادنجان بورانی

After thirty years, O Bu-Ishaq! this fact has been verified that brinjal is egg-plant, and egg-plant is brinjal.

*Lines of Na'amat-allah**of Kerman.*

گوهر بحر بیکرات مائیم }
 گاه موجیم و گاه دریائیم } 11 {
 ما بدین آمدیم در دنیا
 که خدا را بخلق بنائیم }

We are the pearls of the }
 limitless ocean, at times we }
 are the wave, and at times we }
 are the sea. Our purpose in }
 coming into this world was } 11 {
 to show God unto men. }

Lines of Abu-Ishâq.

رشته لاک معرفت مائیم }
 که خیریم و گاه بُغرائیم } 11 {
 ما از آن آمدیم در مطبخ
 که بپاهچه قلبه بنمائیم }

We are the vermicelli of }
 the kneading-trough of Di- }
 vine Knowledge; at times we }
 are the dough, and at times }
 the pie-crust. Our purpose }
 in coming into the kitchen } 11 {
 was to show the fried meat
 to the patty. }

12. *Other Lines of Abu-Ishâq.*

من آن نیم که ز حلوا عنان بگردانم } که ترک صحبت شیرین نه کار فرهاد است

I am not the one to turn away from the *Halwâ*,* for it is not in Farhâd's nature to forego the company of Shirîn.

[There is here a pun on the word *shirin* which means 'Sweet,' and was the name of Khusro Parwiz's sweetheart, beloved by the sculptor Farhâd.]

13. خور در رواقِ ازرق چون رو نهد بزردي
ياد آيدم مزعفر در صحنِ لاجوردی

When the Sun in the blue sky assumes a yellow colour, (at the time of setting), it reminds me of *saffron-pilâw* placed in a blue dish!

14. A VERITABLE HERO.

(The Indian poet Ja'afar's description of himself,
in the manner of Firdousi.)

من آن رستمِ وقتِ روئينِ تم که ده يايِ از مشتِ خود بشکنم
کنم روزن اندر چياتيِ بتير بر آرم دمار از سرِ موی پير
پيوشم اگر جوشنِ جنگِ را هزيمت دهم پشهٔ لنگِ را
يك حله بالِ مگسِ بر کنم قطارِ دو صد مور برهم زنم
اگر بر زنم پنجه در دالِ بهات فتد هيبت و خوفِ من در جهات
بدوزم بر مچ و سنانِ دوده را شگافم بچنگالِ فالوده را
درين دورِ ثانی که رستمِ منم بتاشه بگرزِ گراتِ بشکنم
من آن شهسوارم که وقتِ نبرد بر آرم يک مشت از پنبه کرد
به هنگامِ خشم و ترددِ تلاش کنم غرقِ انگشت در دالِ ماش
چنان بگسlem رشتهٔ خام را که سازم خجلِ رستم و سام را
اگر بر کشم تیغِ تدبير را بيرم سرِ شيرِ تصوير را
من آنم اگر اسبِ جولانِ کنم چهل خانهٔ موش ويرانِ کنم
بنام و نشانِ جعفرِ دردِ مند چو بانگِ خر آوازهٔ من بلند

I am that bronze-bodied Rustom of the time, who, with a single blow of the fist, can break into pieces ten '*pâpars*.'† With my arrow I can make a breach in a pan-cake, and can bring down destruction upon the head of a gray hair. If I but don the armour of battle, I can put to flight even a lame gnat. In a single onset

* A kind of sweetmeat.

† In Hindi, a large brittle wafer made of gram flour and seasoned with spice.

I can dismember a fly; and I can cause a sad havoc in the ranks of two hundred ants. I become an object of terror to the world whenever I grapple with '*dāl bhāt*.'¹ I can make my spear pass from end to end through any quantity of milk, and with my claws alone I am able to rend asunder '*faloodah*.'² In these times, when I am regarded as another Rustom, I, with my ponderous battle-axe, am able to shatter to pieces a '*batasha*.'³ I am that renowned warrior that can, at the time of battle, shake out dust from a mass of cotton, with a blow from my fist. Whenever I get excited, how deeply can I plunge my finger into a mess of *pulse*!⁴ I can put to shame even Rustom and Sâm with the way in which I can break a thread of raw yarn. Whenever I draw the sword of determination, away flies the head of the lion in the picture. When on horse-back I rush to the assault, full forty rat-holes are demolished in an instant. I am well known by the name of '*Ja'afar the afflicted*,' and my renown is far-sounding like the braying of an ass!

1 Boiled rice and pulse. (Hindi.)

2 A kind of porridge made with rose-water.

3 Sugar drops, hollow inside. (Hindi.)

4 *पुल* is Hindi for 'pulse.'

All underlined words are Hindi.

BITS OF HUMOUR.

—:O:—

1. *The Ways of My Charmer.* (میلی)

- غافل بین رسید و وفا را بهانه ساخت
- افگند سر پیش و حیا را بهانه ساخت
- تا از جفای او نه رهم خون من نه ریخت
- بی رحم بین که ترس خدا را بهانه ساخت
- از بزم تا ز آمدن من برون رود
- برخاست گرم و دادن جا را بهانه ساخت

She came across me by chance, and then pretended that it was love of me that brought her. She hung down her head (in order that I might not have the delight of gazing at her face), and assigned modesty as the reason for the act. In order that I might not be delivered from her oppression, she did not kill me all at once; but see how the cruel one sheltered herself under the plea of 'fear of God!' When I went to the assembly, wherein she was, she quickly rose up to go, but her excuse was that she wanted to make room for me!

2. *The Cruel Fair One.* (قتیل)

- ما را بغزه کشت و قضا را بهانه ساخت
- خود سوی ما ندید و حیا را بهانه ساخت
- دستی بدوش غیر نهاد از سر کرم
- ما را چو دید اغزش یا را بهانه ساخت
- رفتم بسجده که بینم جال دوست
- دستی برخ کشید و دعا را بهانه ساخت
- عاشق کُشی چو کرد شده دست و یاش سرخ
- وین طرفه مکر بین که حنا را بهانه ساخت

She killed us with her coquetry, but she would have us believe that it was the hand of fate. She purposely turned away her face from us, and put forth the excuse that it was but the result of modesty. She laid her hand on the shoulder of another man, by way of favour, but on seeing us, she pretended this was due to her

foot slipping. I went to a mosque in order to gaze on her loveliness, but she hid her face with her hands, pretending to be absorbed in her devotions. Her hands and feet were stained red, with the blood of her lovers, but with consummate art she pretended it was the stain of *henna*.

3. *A Chivalrous Brother.* (میلی)

همشیره خرج ماتم بابا ازان من : صبر از من و تردّد و غوغا ازان تو
در خفیه استماع وصیت ازان من : در نوحه همزبانی ماما ازان تو
کهنه قلم دوات شکسته ازان من : طومار نظم و دفتر انشاء ازان تو
آن لاشه اشتران قطاری ازان من : آن بارکش خران توانا ازان تو
یک هفته چرخ مطرب و ساقی ازان من : هفتاد ساله طاعت بابا ازان تو
آن مالها که مانده بدینا ازان من : وان چیزها که کرده بعقبی ازان تو

Sister, let mine be the expense of mourning for our father. Be it mine to bear the affliction with patience, and be it thine to show agitation and to wail. Let mine be the task of hearing the will read privately, and thine to join mother in her loud lamentations for the deceased. Hand over the old reed pen and the broken inkstand to me, and take thou the volume of father's verses and the file of his letters. Allow me to take those *lean and ill-fed* camels, whilst thou canst take those *strong* asses fit to carry loads. Be mine *but a week's* enjoyment of wine and music, and be thine the fruits of father's *seventy years* of devotions. I take for myself merely the property he has left in *this* world, leaving to thee the far better things he has in store for him in the *next*.

4. *A Fair Division.* (وحشی)

زیاتر آنچه مانده ز بابا ازان تو : بدای برادر از من و اعلا ازان تو
این طاس خالی از من و آن کوزه که بود : پارینه یر ز شهید مصفا ازان تو
بابوی ریشان گسلر میخ کن ز من : مهمیز کله تیز و مطلا ازان تو
آن دیگ لب شکسته صابون پزی ز من : آن چپچه هریسه و حلوا ازان تو
آن قوچ شاخ کج که زند شاخ ازان من : قوغای جنگ قوچ و تماشا ازان تو
این استر چوش لکد زن ازان من : این گربه مصاحب بابا ازان تو
از صحنه خانه تا بلبل بام ازان من : از بام خانه تا شریا ازان تو

Brother, I leave to thee the best of father's property; I take whatever is bad, and thou mayest take whatever is good. I take this *empty* goblet, but leave to thee the earthen pot, which was last year *full* of pure honey. Let me have this halter-breaking *mischievous* pony, while thou mayest have the *gilt* sharp-pointed spur. Let this broken-edged big pot, used *only for boiling soap*, fall to my share, for I leave to thee that nice spoon used for *eating sweets and pastry*. Be it mine to take care of this crooked-horned ram that butts at everyone, and be thine the pleasure and enjoyment of witnessing a ram-fight. Allow me to take away this sullen and kicking mule; I leave to thee, in its place, the cat that was the constant companion of father. I take but a small portion of this house, that is, *from the ground-floor to the roof*; while the greater portion I leave to thee—that is, *from the roof to the sky*.

5. *An Equitable Distribution of Property.* (رفیعی کاشانی)

مال و منال حضرت بابا برادران : يك نيمه از تو نيمه ديگر ازان من
 من آن نيم که گويم ازین جنسها که هست : جنسی که باشد از همه بهتر ازان من
 جان برادری تو ز تو هرچه بهتر است : بد هست هرچه جان برادر ازان من
 قرض پدر که از همه بيش است ازان تو : وجهش که هست از همه کمتر ازان من
 دايه که شیر داده بابا ازان تو : گاوی که زبوست خون دلر ما ازان من
 آن چار باغ خرم مرهون ازان تو : آن يك دو باغ کهته بی در ازان من
 ملك نفيس خالصه شهر ازان تو : املاك هيچ نعم نباشد ازان من
 آن مادبان که داشته صد کره زان تو : آن اشترات بارکش نر ازان من

Brother, we shall divide equally between us the property of our late father—half going to you and half to me. I am not the man to claim for myself the best of everything left: thou art dear to me as my life, and I give to thee the best of everything, keeping for myself only that which is of small worth. Do thou inherit our father's debts, which amount to *a very large sum*, while I inherit only his pension, *which is very small*. The nurse who gave *milk* to father belongs to thee, while the cow that has given us so much *trouble* shall belong to me. I assign to thee those *four elegant gardens*, that are mortgaged, while I take only those one or two *gardens, that show signs of decay and are even without a gate*.

Thou canst take that *valuable estate* that is attached by Government, leaving to me the estates that at present *bring no profits*. I give thee the mare *that had a hundred foals*, keeping for my share only those male mules—*mere beasts of burden*.

6. *The Mud.* (بهار مشهدی) *

افتاده ایم سخت بدامِ بلایِ گل :: یارب چو ما مباد کسی مبتلایِ گل
گل مشکلی شده ست بهر معبر و طریق :: گامِ روندگان شده مشکل کشایِ گل
هر گه که ابر خیمه زند در فضای شهر :: بر بامِ هر سرای بر آید لوایِ گل
گل دل نمی کند ز خراسان و اهلِ او :: ای جانِ اهلِ شهر فدای وفایِ گل
گر صد هزار کفش بدرد بیایِ خلق :: هرگز نمی رسند بکشفِ عطایِ گل
با خضمِ اگر روند بظلماتِ کوچه خلق :: اسکندری خورند درین چشمهایِ گل
اول قدم که بوسه زند گلِ یایِ ما :: افتیم بر زمین و ببوسیم یایِ گل
گلها ثقیل و درهم و کوچه خراب و تنگ :: آه از جفایِ کوچه و درد از جفایِ گل
گل هر چه را بینجه در آورد و نکرده :: صد آفرین بینجه معجز نایِ گل
از پشت تا بشانه و از پیش تا بریش :: هستند خلق یکسره غرقِ عطایِ گل

Fast entangled are we in the woeful toils of the Mud. Lord! Let no one be afflicted with Mud as we are!

At every crossing, and on every path, the Mud has become a problem, the solvers of which are the feet of the passengers.

Whenever a cloud pitches its tent within the precincts of the city, on the terrace of every house rears its head the banner of the Mud.

The Mud taketh not away its love from Khorasan and its people; may the lives of the people of the city be a sacrifice to this constancy of the Mud.

If the people wear out even a hundred thousand shoes, they would still be unable to penetrate the veil of the Mud.

* From "The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia" by Prof. E. G. Browne. The lines are an imitation of the verses *On Snow* by Kamāl-ud-din Ismail, beginning:—

هرگز کسی نداد بدینسان نشانِ برف :: کوی که لقمه ایست زمین در دهانِ برف

If the people were to go into the dark recesses of the streets, even in the company of Khizr, they would tumble headlong into these fountains of the Mud.*

At the very first step that the Mud kisses our feet, we fall to the ground and kiss the feet of the Mud.

The Mud is heavy and tough, and the lanes are narrow and ruined: Alas for the torment of the lanes, and alack for the torment of the Mud!

The Mud never lets go whatsoever it gets into its clutch. A hundred blessings on this miracle-working hand of the Mud!

At the back upto the shoulders, and in the front upto the beard the people are, one and all, bespattered with the bounty of the Mud!

7. WHAT ONE HAS TO BE THANKFUL FOR!

(By the Indian poet جعفر زلی)

(The underlined words are Hindustani.)

جعفر ببوستان جهان دم غنیمت است :: شادی اگر نصیب نشد غم غنیمت است
 چون دال روئی آمده فرمان کردگار :: گر بیشتر بهم نرسد کم غنیمت است
 گر اتفاق دیدن دُرِ یتیم نیست :: نظاره سبوی دانه شبنم غنیمت است
 در خانه که صورت زن جنگجو بود :: زان خانه محنت سفر و رم غنیمت است
 گر بی سرور مجلس شادی بهم رسد :: بر اهل درد زان صف ماتم غنیمت است
 حلوا اگر بشت دونان بهم رسد :: نزدیک اهل دانش ازان سم غنیمت است
 گر جشن هر دو عید نباشد ترا نصیب :: آن گریه های مایه محرم غنیمت است
 فالین و سوزنی نبود گر نصیب تو :: یارینه کهنه بستر و جام غنیمت است
 تریوز و خربزه نرسد گر ترا بدست :: یک سبز بهانک کهیژه بالم غنیمت است
 بریانی و کباب نباشد اگر نصیب :: آن ساگ نیم بخته و شلغم غنیمت است
 کر شیوه گدائی و خواری طلب کنی :: پس نوکری شاه معظم غنیمت است

Ja'afar! in this garden of the world, to be able to breathe is a boon. If joy be not one's lot, even grief is a boon.

If Destiny assigned to thee merely bread and pulse, since more cannot be had, even this little is a boon.

* There is a play on the word *Iskandari* which means a stumble. Iskandar is the same as Alexander, who is said to have gone in search of the Fountain of Life, into the Regions of Darkness, in the company of the prophet Khizr.

If there be no opportunity of viewing a priceless pearl, even looking at a dew-drop is a boon.

If in the house the wife be a shrew, flight from such a house, even with the hardships of a journey, is a boon.

If there be held a festive assembly without the entertainment of music, then men of sorrow would rather consider a gathering of mourners as a boon.

If the enjoyment of the festivals of the two Eids be not thy lot, the lamentations of the month of Muharram are a boon.

If pastry can only be had by going under the obligation of mean persons, wise men would rather regard poison as a boon.

If a rug and a quilt be unobtainable, then last year's old bedding and a mat are a boon.

If water-melons and musk-melons be beyond thy reach, a green slice of cucumber is a boon.

If fried meat and roast meat fall not to thy lot, half-cooked vegetable and turnips come as a boon.

If thou wouldst be a beggar and a miserable man, then, for this purpose, the service of the great King is a boon!

8. *Description of a Horse.* (انوری)

دی بامدادِ عیدِ بصحرا برون شدم : با یک دو آشنا هم از ابتدای روزگار
اسی چنان که دانی زیر از میانِ زیر : در کاهلی که بدنه سبک تگ نه راهوار
در جست و خیز مانده هم راهِ عیدگاه : من گاه از او پیاده و گاهی بر او سوار
راضی نشد بدان که پیاده شوم ازان : وز فرطِ ضعف خواست که بر من شود سوار
نه از قیامِ خاسته بیرون شدی بزور : نه از زمینِ خسته بر انگیختی غبار
که طعنه ازان که رکابش دراز کن : که بدله ازين که عتاش فرو گذار
من واله و خجل متحیر فرو شده : چشمی سوی یبستم و گوشِ سوی یسار
تا طعنه که می دهم باز تیرگی : تا بدله که می کنم باز شرمسار

Yesterday, in the early morning of the Eid festival, I went out towards the plain with one or two chance acquaintances.

A horse had I, one that you know, a sorry hack, who, owing to indolence, was neither a galloper nor an ambler.

All the way to the Eid-gâh he went frisking, while I was at times mounted on him, and at times dismounted, going on foot.

He was not content with my getting down from his back—from excess of weakness he even wanted to ride on me!

From the dust that he raised he had not the strength to move out—nay, he could hardly stir up the dust even on a miry road!

At times I had to hear the taunt—"lengthen the stirrups," and at times I had to bear the sarcasm—"loosen the reins."

I, distracted and ashamed, dismounted in bewilderment, with an eye towards the right and an ear towards the left;—to discern whose taunt was going to bewilder me again—to discern whose sarcasm was going to abash me afresh.

HUMOUR OF HYPERBOLE.

—:0:—

1. (مولا نائی)

بختم اگر تلافی شبهای غم کنند : یک روز خوش بمردم عالم نمی رسد

If Fate were to give me compensation for the nights I have passed in grief, not a single day of enjoyment would be left for mankind.

2. (شاه کبود جامه)

از دل من گر نه هر دم آتشی برخاستی : ز آب چشم من جهانی سر بسر دریاستی

But for the Fire that issues from my heart with every breath, the whole world would have been turned into an ocean by the water from mine eyes.

3. (حافظ)

هزار بار بشویم دهن بشک و گلاب : هنوز نام تو گفتن کالر بی ادیست

I wash my mouth a thousand times with rose-water and musk, but still it would be the height of disrespect to give utterance to your name.

4. (شیخ محمد خاتون)

هست ریش حضرت قاضی جالا بی کزاف :

چون برو خسید نهالی چون یشت افتد لحاف :

The beard of his holiness Kāzi Jamālā is, without exaggeration, a bed when he sleeps with his face downward, and a blanket when he lies on his back.

5. *Description of a horse* (اسدی طوسی)

چو شب بود لیکن چو بهشتافتی : بتگ روز بگذشته دریافتی

If it was night-time and he took to running, he overtook the past day.

6. (حیرانی قمری)

اجل ره بر سرم نتواند آوردن شب هجران :

چنان کر دود آهم خانه تاریکست و روزن هم :

On the night of separation from my sweetheart, Death cannot find its way to my side, for on account of the smoke of my sighs, the house and the windows are in darkness.

7. (مشرقی)

کردند شهیدان تو چون روز جزا جمع : معلوم شود وسعت صحرائ قیامت

When those who have died for thee shall assemble on the Day of Judgment, it will be perceived how very extensive is the field of Resurrection.

8. (ظہیر فارابی)

نه کرسی فلک نهد اندیشه زیر پای : تا بوسه بر رکابِ قزل ارسلان زند

Imagination places under its feet the nine storeys of the heavens, in order to be able to kiss the stirrup of Kizil Aرسالان.

9. (امیر خسرو)

هر دو عالم قیمت خود گفته : نرخ بالا کن که ارزانی هنوز

This world and the next are, thou sayest, thy price. Raise the price still higher, for even *yet* thou art cheap.

10.

ما گرچه یا شکسته بصحرا نشسته ایم : اما ز آبِ دیده بدریا نشسته ایم

Although it is in the wilderness that we are sitting crippled, we are in the midst of an ocean made by the water from our eyes.

11. (غزالی)

در کوی تو بستر شده خاکستر امشب : یا سوخته از آتش دل بستم امشب

In your street to-night my bed was of ashes; I should say rather that the fire of my heart consumed the bed.

12. (طالب)

هر سنگ که بر سینه زدم نقش تو بگرفت : آن هم بتی از بهر پرستیدن من شد

Every stone, with which I pelted my breast, became impressed with thine image; so the stone too became an idol for my worship.

[The sense is rather deep. The poet wants to say that the image of his sweetheart occupies his heart to the exclusion of all other things, so much so, that even a bit of stone coming in contact with the breast, receives on it the impression of the image that is in the heart.]

13. (صنوحی)

چه شهری ز وسعت برون از گان : تکینندانِ فیروزه آسان

What a city! whose expanse was beyond the stretch of Imagination. It was like the 'setting' of the ring for holding the turquoise gem of the sky.

14. (شمس الدین قی)

در خدمت ای صدر فلک مرتبه دزدیست : کو مهره بسحر از دهن مار بدزدد
پیراهن دزدی چو بتن چست بیوشد : از مرد برهنه دو سه شلوار بدزدد
صیار ز دینار یکی حبه ربایند : او خود ز یکی حبه دو دینار بدزدد
ور سوی مزاری رود از مهر زیارت : از مرده کفن و ز کفن آهار بدزدد

O Wazier of exalted dignity, in your employ you have a thief who, with his juggling tricks, can steal the snake-stone from the very mouth of the snake. When he puts on the close-fitting shirt of roguery, he is able to steal two or three pairs of trousers even from a *naked* man! The coiner can by 'sweating,' steal a grain of the metal from the Dinar, but this man can steal a couple of Dinars from a grain of the metal! When he goes to a shrine for pilgrimage, from the dead body he steals the shroud, and from the shroud he steals the starch.

15.

رشکم ز گفتگوی تو خاموش می کند : نامت نمی برم که دلم گوش می کند

It is jealousy that keeps me from speaking of you. I do not utter your name lest even my heart should hear it.

16. (انوری)

ای خواجه درازیت رسیدست بجائی : کنز اهل سیوات بگوشت برسد صوت
گر عمر تو چون قد تو بودی بدرازی : تو زنده یابندی و بردی ملک الموت

O Khwajeh, thy stature is so tall that thou canst hear the conversation of the celestial beings! Were thy life as long as thy body, thou wouldst survive even the Angel of Death!

17. (مولانا لطف الله نیشاپوری)

طالعی دارم آنکه از پی آب : گر روم سوی بحر برگردد
ور بدو زخ روم پی آتش : آتش از یخ فسرده تر گردد

ور ز گَه التماسِ سنگ کنم : سنگ نایاب چون گهر گردد
 ور بنزد کسی روم بسوال : هر دو گوشش بحکم کر گردد
 اسیر تازی اگر سوار شوم : زیر رانم چو خر گردد
 با همه نیز شکر باید کرد : که مبادا کزین بتر گردد

My Luck is such that if I were to go to the ocean for water, the ocean would become as dry as land. And if I were to go to Hell to get some fire, the fire would get *frozen*, even more so than ice. If I were to ask of a mountain but a piece of stone, stones would become as scarce as pearls. If I were to go to any one for asking a boon, his ears would perforce become deaf. And if I were to ride an Arab horse, his pace would be no better than an ass's. But in spite of all, I must be thankful, lest worse luck should befall me!

18.

نیم یک لحظه از یادِ تو خاموش : فراموشی شده از دل فراموش

I have not ceased, even for an instant, to have you constantly in my mind. Even 'forgetfulness' has been forgotten by my heart.

19. (اسدی)

چنان تیره گیتی که از لب خروش : ز پس تبرگی ره نبردی بگوش

It was so very dark, that the cry coming out of the lips could not find its way to the ear owing to the intense darkness.

20. (افسر قاچار)

گر آن لب شیرین بنبسم بکشائی : حلوائی از این پس در دکان نکشاید

If thou but open thy sweet lips in smile, no confectioner would henceforth have to open the door of his shop.

21. (سحاب اصفهانی)

بچشم قطره بارم مردم چشم : چو در دریا یکی نیلوفرستی
 صدف پروردن از دریا عجب نیست : صدف بنگر که دریا پرورستی

In my showery eyes the pupils are like water-lilies in the sea. There is nothing strange in a sea producing oyster shells, but look at these oyster-shells (*i.e.*, the eyes) which breed in them the sea.

22. (قناني)

ای که می گوئی چرا جامی بجای می خری :
این سخن با ساقی ماگو که ارزان کرده است :

O thou who askest me why I purchase a cup of wine with life, go ask this question of our Cup-bearer, who it is that has fixed a price so low.

23. (خواجه سعد گل)

تم از ضعف چنان شد که اجل جست و نیافت :
ناله هر چند نشان داد که در پیرهن است :

Weakness so reduced my body, that Death seeking for it found it not, howsoever the groans gave indication that it was inside the shirt!

24. (طالب آملی)

بتن بویا کند گلهای تصویر نهالی را : یا بیدار سازد خفتگان نقش قالی را

With her body she perfumes the flowers painted on the bed-rug; with her foot she awakens the sleepers of the picture embroidered in the carpet.

25. (امیر خسرو)

هزار بار بکوی تو بگذرم روزی : اگر ز اشک خودم آب در میان نبود

A thousand times a day would I pass through thy street, were it not that my way is barred by the river of my own tears.

26. (ملا هاتف)

تا آه من بجاست فلک چرخ می زند : آبی بکار نیست بر آسیای باد

So long as there is a constant current of my sighs, the heavens continue to revolve; water is not needed to drive a wind-mill.

27. (سروری)

سروری تقدیر جان در پایش افشام ولی ترسم : که آسیبی رساند از گرانی پای جانانرا

Saroori! I would fain strew the Beloved's path with the capital of my soul, but my fear is that the coarseness of its substance might hurt her feet.

28. (صائب)

بدوقی تکیه بر شمشیر جسم لاغرم دارد : که شبنم بر کنار گل حسد بر بستم دارد

My lean body can repose on the sword-edge with such delight,
that the dew on the bosom of the rose envies me my bed.

29. (ابوطالب کلیم)

چه حاجتست بقاصد که نامه های کلیم : بدست آو روان همچو کاغذ بادست

What need is there of a messenger, since the letters of Kalīm,
'driven by his sighs, go forth like the paper-kite?

30. (شعیب جوشقانی) *

چو شب گیرم خیالت را در آغوش : سحر از بستم بوی گل آید

When at night I embrace thine image in dream, in the morning
there cometh the perfume of the rose from my bed.

31. (منصور منطقی رازی)

يك موی بدزدیدم از دو زلفت : چو زلف زدی ای صنم بشانه
چو نانش بسختی همی کشیدم : چو مور که گندم کشد بخانه
با موی بخانه شدم پدر گفت : منصور کدامست زین دو گانه

I stole a hair from your two locks, when you, mine idol, were
combing them. With much effort I dragged it along with me, as
does an ant carrying a grain of wheat to its hole. When I reached
home with the hair, father asked—"Which of you twain is
Mansoor?"†

32. (رامش شیرازی)

مرا از دیده در دامن همی جیخون فرو ریزد :
شگفتی چشمه را بنگر که دریا چون فرو ریزد :

From my eyes there floweth down to my skirt the river Oxus:
What a wonderful fountain is this from which issues a full river!

* Also attributed to ابی طاهر لری همدانی

† The poet's name.

FINE FANCY.

—:0:—

1. (سلمان ساوجي)

در درج در عقب لب تقدیر جان نهاد : جنسی نفیس بود بجایِ نهان نهاد
قفلی ز لعل بر درِ آن درج زد لب : خالت زعنبر آمد و مهری بر آن نهاد

In thy casket of pearls, the cornelian of thy lips has concealed a charm worth purchasing with life. Being of inestimable value, it has been put in a hidden place. Thy lips form a ruby lock over the casket, and thy lovely mole is an amber seal thereon.

[The qaseideh of which these lines form the opening was written in imitation of Zahiruddin Fāryābi, at the request of Sultan Oweis and his mother Dilshād Khátoon. For this the poet obtained the grant of two villages in Rei as a reward.]

2. (ظهير فاريابی)

رسیده گوشه ابرو بچشم سرمه ساي او : تو بنداري کجاند اريست درد نبال آهوئي
يکي خال سبّه جا کرده بر کنج لب لعلش : تو گوئي بر لب آب بقا بنشسته دوشي

The fringe of the eyebrow encroaches upon her collyrium-using eye; you may say that it is an archer in pursuit of an antelope. On a corner of her ruby-like lips is a black mole; say rather, it is a Hindu* sitting on the margin of the Fountain of Life.

3. (انيسی)

کشاده هندوي زلفش دکاني : بهر موئي نهاده نرخ جاني

The Hindu* of her ringlets has opened a shop, wherein the price of every hair is a life.

4. (وقوعي)

چشمش از دزدیده دیدنهایست در صیدِ دلم :
همچو صیّادی که ریزد اندک اندک دانه را :

Her eyes with their stolen glances want to entrap my heart, like the bird-catcher who scatters the grain little by little.

* In Persian poetry 'Hindu' is generally associated with *black* colour.

5. (جانی)

- هست دریا را ز کشتی کاسه چوین بکف
دارد آهنگ گدائی زان کفِ گوهر فشان

The boat that you see on the ocean is the beggar's wooden platter, wherewith the ocean comes a-begging, expecting something from that pearl-bestowing hand.

6. (مولانا محترم)

- ز آهم بر عذارِ نازکش زلف آنچنان لرزد
که عکسِ سنبل اندر آب از بادِ وزان لرزد
خرامان چون شود گردد تنش سر تا قدم لرزان
بسانِ گلبنی کز نازکی گلها بر آفت لرزد

On her delicate cheeks the ringlets flutter with the breath of my sigh, in the same manner as the reflection of the hyacinth in the water quivers with the blowing of the breeze. When she walks there is a pleasant tremor of the body from head to foot, just like the quivering of the roses on a tender rose-branch.

7. (ظہیر فاریابی)

بیدا شد از کنارِ میدانِ آسمان : شکلِ هلالِ چون سرِ چوگانِ شہریار
رویِ فلکِ چو لُجّه دریا و ماہِ نو : مانندِ کشتی که ز دریا کند گذار
یا بر مثالِ ماہیِ یونس میانِ آب : آہنگِ در کشیدنِ او کرده از کنار
یا همچو یونس آمدہ بیرون ز بطنِ حوت : افتادہ بر کنارِ دریا نجف و زار
در معرضِ خلافِ جهانی ز مرد و زن : قومیش در نظارہ و خلعتی در انتظار
من با خرد بجزرہ خلوت شتافتم : گفتم کہ ای نتیجہ الطافِ کردگار
باز اینچہ نقشِ بوالعجب و شکلِ نادر است : کز کارگاہِ غیبِ ہمی گردد آشکار
آن شاہد از بجاست کہ این چرخِ شوخ چشم : از گوشِ او بیرون کند این تغزِ گوشوار
گردون ز بازوی کہ ربود است این طراز : گیتی ز ساعدِ کہ بدزدید این سوار
گر جرمِ کوکب است چرا شد چنین دو تا : و رِیکِ مہ است چرا شد چنین نزار
گفت آنچه بر شمردی ازین جملہ ہیچ نیست : دانی کہ چیست با تو بگویم باختصار
نعلِ سمندِ شاہِ جهان است کاسمان : ہر ماہِ نو بسر نہد از بہر افتخار

From a side of the expanse of the sky there appeared the shape of the crescent, like the head of the curved bat of the king. The face of the firmament was like the abyss of the sea, and the crescent moon was like a boat crossing the ocean. Or, the crescent was the fish that swallowed Jonas, waiting in the water for his coming. Or perhaps, it was Jonas himself that had come out of the belly of the fish, and was lying worn out and exhausted on the shore. Men and women throughout the world were, with respect to it, in opposite circumstances: some were actually seeing it, and some were on the look out for it. I ran to the boudoir of retirement with Reason, and said, "O thou the result of the favours of God! What is this wonderful shape that has come out of the Divine workshop? Where is the lovely girl from whose ears the impudent sky has removed this pretty ear-ornament? If it is an armlet, from whose arms have the heavens taken it out? If it is a bracelet, from whose wrist has the world stolen it? If it is a planetary body, why is it so bent? And if it is the shape of the moon, why is it so very lean?" Reason replied, "It is not any one of all the things you have enumerated. I'll tell you briefly what it is—it is the shoe of the king's horse, which the sky wears on its forehead, at the beginning of every month, for self-glorification."

8.

رفت در خرگه مهر من مرغ دل حیران یابد
شمع در فانوس شد پروانه سرگردان بماند

My sweetheart has entered the tent, and the bird of my heart has remained bewildered. The candle is put into the lantern, and the moth is left out fluttering.

9.

می آبرد خوابِ عدم آخر ترا هشیار باش
آمد و رفتِ تنه‌ها جنبشِ گهواره است

Take care, the sleep of non-existence will overtake you at last; for the coming and going of the breath is but the rocking of the cradle.

10. (خاقانی)

بر بطلی چون دایگان طفلِ نالان در بغل
طفل را از خواب دستِ دایگان انگیزته

The fiddler was like a nurse carrying in her arms a crying child whom her touch had awakened from sleep.

11. (امیر معزی)

- زان عنبرین دو زلفِ زره دار تافته است .
 کز سیم یافته ست یکی چاه در ذقن .
 تا چو ت دلم بدان چه سیمین در اوفند .
 دل بر کشم ز چاه بدان عنبرین رسن .

Those two curly amber-locks have become entwisted, for this reason that they have found in the chin a silver well; so that if my heart were to fall into that silver well, I should be able to draw it out by means of those amber ropes.

12. (سنائی)

- تو علم آموختی از حرص آنگه ترس کاند رشب .
 چو دزدی با چراغ آید گزیده تر برد کالا .

Thou hast acquired knowledge with mere worldly motives. Take care then, for if the thief comes with a lamp, he can take away the choicest goods.

13. (مقصود)

- صبا دارد بکف چو گانِ زلفِ عنبر افشانش .
 بازی می زند هر لحظه بر گویِ زخداش .

The breeze holds in the hand the curved bat made of her amber-scented locks, and in play strikes with it now and then the ball of her chin.

14. (اسدی)

- شبِ بود زنگی سیه تر ز زاغ . مه نو چو در دستِ زنگی چراغ .

The night was like a negro darker than the raven, and the new Moon was like a lamp in the hand of the negro.

15. (سعدی)

- زبان در دهانِ خردمند چیست . کلیدِ درِ گنجِ صاحبِ هنر .
 چو در بسته باشد چه داند کسی . که جوهر فروش است یا پیله ور .

What is the tongue in the mouth of a wise man? It is the key of the door of the treasure-house of the sage. When the door is locked, how can any one know whether the owner is a jeweller or a pedlar?

16. (ائیرالدین اومانی)

آن لب و خط بین که تو گوئی فتاد : رهگذر مورچه بر انگین

Look at those lips with the down on them; you may say there is a swarm of ants over honey.

17. (خبازی نیشاپوری)

می بینی آن دو زلف که بادش همی برد
گوئی که عاشقیست که هیچش قرار نیست
یا نه که دست حاجبِ سالار لشکرست
کز دور می نماید کامروز بار نیست

Do you see those ringlets which flutter in the wind? You might say, here is a lover who has no rest at all. Or, perhaps, it is the hand of the door-keeper of the commander-in-chief, signalling from afar that there will be no reception to-day.

18. (رضی الدین نیشاپوری)

چو در محفل سخن رانی هر آنکس مستمع باشد
صدف کردار منزه او شود در استخوان گوهر

When you speak in the assembly, the brain inside the cranium of every listener becomes like a pearl in the oyster-shell.

19. (فبضی)

در زیر آن دو زلف زندگانِ ساده بین
یک گوی در میان دو چوگات فتاده بین

Look at the lovely chin in the midst of the two ringlets—look at the ball that is lying between two hockey-sticks!

20. (خاوری شیرازی)

زلفِ دراز بر لبِ لعنت نهاده : ماری سیاه مهره خود برده در دهن

Thou hast placed thy long locks over thy lips—a black snake is holding its 'snake-stone' in the mouth!

21. (قطره اصفهانی)

زاهد اگر تو منکر هستی که ره ندارد : هندو بحوضِ کوثر در باغِ خلد کافر
بر روی ولعلِ او بین آن زلف و خال کآمد : کافر بیابِ جنتِ هندو بحوضِ کوثر

O devotee! if thou believest not that a Hindu can have access to the fountain of Kowsar (in Heaven,) or an infidel to the garden of Paradise, look at the ringlet on her face and the mole on her lips—the infidel in the garden of Paradise, the Hindu at the fount of Kowsar! -

22. (هدایت)

چون باد بجنباند زلفِ سیّه را : تابان شود آن چهره گریز فزون تر
گوئی بکفی مروحه از پرِ زاغست : وز جنبشِ آن مروحه روشن کند آذر

When the wind waves thy dark ringlets, thy rosy face glows still more. One may say, it has in hand a fan of raven's feather, and by the movement of the fan it makes the fire blaze.

23. (مجد الدین همگر)

تا بر گلت ز سبزه نگهبان نشسته است : صد گونه داغ بر دلِ حیران نشسته است
گوئی که طوطی است که جویای شکر است : یا خیلِ مور گردِ گلسستان نشسته است
جانها فدای آن خطِ سبزه که چون خضر : خوش بر کنار چشمه حیوان نشسته است
هندوی آن خط و ریخِ خویم که گوئیا : کردی ز مشک بر گلِ خندان نشسته است

Ever since the verdure has been keeping watch over thy rose (*i.e.*, since down has appeared on thy cheek) there have been impressed brands hundred-fold on the distracted heart. One might say it is a parrot in quest of sugar, or a swarm of ants gathering on the environs of the rose-garden. May souls be the sacrifice of that verdant down of thine which, like Khizar, is pleasantly reclining on the margin of the Fountain of Life. I am the slave of that down and that handsome face, which look like musk-powder sprinkled upon the blooming rose.

24. (تاج الدین اسماعیل)

چو رویِ خوبِ ترا بیند این دو چشمِ رهی : پر آب گردد و گوئی همی سحاب شود
که هست رویِ تو خورشید و هر که درخورشید : نکه کنند بزمان چشمِ او پر آب شود

When these two eyes of the slave look at thy handsome face, they become full of water—verily they became rain-clouds; for thy face is like the Sun, and whosoever gazeth upon the Sun hath his eyes forthwith full of water.

25. (ابو طالب کلیم)

موجیم که آسودگی ما عدم ماست :: ما زنده از آنیم که آرام نداریم

We are like waves to whom rest meaneth non-existence; we are alive solely because no rest have we.

26. (کال اصفهانی)

رویت دریای حسن و لعلت مرجان :: زلفت عنبر صدف دهن در دندان
ابرو کشتی و چینه یشانی موج :: گرداب بلا غنغ و چشت طوفان

A sea of beauty is thy face, wherein thy lips are coral, thy locks are amber, the mouth is the oyster-shell, and the teeth are pearls. The eyebrow is the boat, and the wrinkles on the forehead the waves; the double-chin is the whirlpool of calamity, and thine eyes are the storm.

27. (امیر خسرو)

یس از ماهیست می بینم مه من کیج مکن ابرو ::
کره مفکن یشانی که مه در غره کم گیرد ::

My Moon! it is after a month that I see thee. Do not lower thine eyebrow. A frown on thy brow is out of place, for the Moon can never be eclipsed in the beginning of the lunation.*

28. (حکیم زلالی خوانساری)

نیست اختر کز برای یبع داغ حسرتش :: درهم از ته کیسه شب در میان انداخته

These are not stars, but rather they are the drachms (coins) which the purse of Night has poured out from its depths, for the purchase of the brand (or token) of the Beloved's love.

29. (عراقی)

نخستین باده کاند در جام کردند :: ز چشم مست ساقی وام کردند

The first wine that was ever poured into the cup was the one borrowed from the intoxicated eyes of the cup-bearer.

* The eyebrow has the form of the crescent—the Moon in the beginning of the lunation. Frowning is compared to the eclipse.

30. (شرف الدین شفره)

گرتوانی ای صبا بگذر شبی در کوی او : و در دلت خواهد بیراز من پیامی سوی او
 آن زمان کانبجاری آهسته باش و دم مزین : تا نشورد خواب خوش بر زنگس جادوی او
 حلقه زلفش بجنبان جز بانگشت ادب : هان و هان ترکی مکن با طره هندوی او
 نرم نرم آن برقع رنگین بر انداز از رخس : و در گانی بدنداری بوسه زن بر روی او
 نی غلط گفتیم من این طاقت ندارم زینهار : گر رسول خاص مائی نیز منکر سوی او
 چون دلم بینی در آنجا کو حرمت باد وصل : من چنین محروم و تو پیوسته همزانی او

If thou canst do so, O Breeze, pass through her street one night, and, if it pleaseth thee, take to her a message from me. When thou reachest there, move gently and make no noise, so that the slumber may not be disturbed of those bewitching eyes. Stir not the curls of her locks except with the finger of reverence—aye, beware, behave not like a Turk with her Hindu (dark) ringlets. Softly and gently remove from her face the coloured veil, and if thy thoughts be not impure, thou mayest kiss that face. But no! I am wrong; my jealousy cannot bear this: if thou art my special messenger I would not have thee even look at her face. If thou findest there my heart, say to it—"Unlawful be to thee this union! Is it fitting that thou shouldst be constantly in her company while I am in such despair?"

31. (غبارازی)

چه غم ای دل اگر جا اندر آن چاهِ ذفن داری :
 که از بهر رهائی هم از آن کیسو رسن داری :

What matters it, O my heart, if thou makest thine abode in that well of the chin, since to get out of it, thou hast the rope of her locks?

32. (میرزا بیدل)

دی سرو بقدِ خود تحشتم می کرد : تقلیدِ قدر تو بیش مردم می کرد
 شد تند نسیم لاله سر جنبانید : خندید گل و غنچه تبسم می کرد

Yesterday the Cypress made a vain display of its stature, and tried to imitate thy form before people; whereupon the breeze became violent, the tulip shook its head, the rose laughed, and the bud smiled in derision.

33. (ملا تجلی بخاری)

دریا سر بوسیدن پایت دارد : دُر آمده عرض می کند بر کوشت
 The sea has desire to kiss thy feet, hence the pearl has come
 and presents the petition to thine ear.

34. (مجد همگر)

Lines on the death of Khurajah Shamsuddin Mahommed.

در ماتم شمس از شفق خون بچکید : مه چهره بکشد و زهره گیسو بدرید
 شب جامه سیاه کرد در ماتم و صبح : بر زد نفس سرد و کریان بدرید

In mourning for Shams, Aurora shed bloody tears, the Moon lacerated her face,* and Venus cut off her locks. For mourning the Night dyed her garments black, and the Morning heaved a cold sigh,† and tore her collar.‡

[Waez Káshifi says that as an elegy this Rubâi has only one rival in the whole Persian Literature, and that is the following one:—]

35. (امیرشاهی سبزواری)

Lines on the death of Mirza Bâysangar.

در ماتم تو دهر بسی ششون کرد : لاله همه خون دیده در دامن کرد
 گل جیب قباى ارغوانی بدرید : قری نمدی سیاه در گردن کرد

In mourning for thee the World made much plaint: The Tulip bedewed its skirt with tears of blood, the Rose tore the collar of its vermilion robe, and the Turtle-dove put on the black scarf round its neck.

36. (ظہیرالدین اصفهانی)

دلدار ز چهره پرده بکشد بروز : صد روز دگر از آن بر افزود بروز
 در زلف رخش نمود خورشید بشب : در خنده لبش ستاره بشود بروز

The sweetheart lifted the veil from her face in day-time; this added to the day-light the light of a hundred days. Her face between the locks showed the Sun at night-time; the laughter of her lips showed the stars in day-time.

* Reference to the waning of the Moon.

† Reference to the cold breezes of the morning.

‡ Reference to the break of day.

37. (کاتبی فی‌شاپوری)

بسوی آن پری یک دوان خواهم فرستادن .
صبا بسیار رفت این بار جان خواهم فرستادن .

To that enchantress I want to send a swift courier. The breeze has gone there many a time and oft: this time it is the soul that I want to send.

38. (واقف هندی)

دردمند از کوچه دلدار می آئیم ما : آه کز دارالشفا بیمار می آئیم ما

From the street of the Beloved we came full of pain. Alas! that from the House-of-Recovery we should return ill!

39. (واقف هندی)

یارب چه چشمه است محبت که من از آن : یک قطره آب خوردم و دریا گریستم

Lord! what a fountain is Love, that out of it I have tasted but a drop, and am able to weep forth a river!

40. (عنصری)

On the Ringlets.

ای شکسته زلف یار از بس که تو دستان کنی .
دست دست تست گر با ساحران یکسان کنی .
گاه بر ماه دو هفته گرد مشک آری پدید .
گاه مر خورشید را در غالیه پنهان کنی .
هم زره پوشی و هم چوگان زنی بر ارغوان .
خوشتن را که زره سازی و که چوگان کنی .
بشکنی بر خوشتن تا نرخی عنبر بشکنی .
خوشتن لرزان کنی تا نرخی مشک ارزان کنی .
نیستی دیوانه بر آتش چرا غلطی همی .
نیستی پروانه گرد شمع چون جولان کنی .
چون بغواهی گشت کردیش گاه تو دیا بود .
چون بخواهی خفت بستر لاله نمان کنی .

O thou broken (i.e. wavy) Ringlet of the Beloved! thou art so skilled in jugglery, that if thou compete with magicians thou wouldst surpass them all.

At times thou coverest the surface of the full-moon with musk-dust, and at times thou hidest the Sun under amber-paste.

Thou puttest on a chain-armour,* and thou also tossest the ball of anemone with thy hockey-club; thou makest thyself at times a shirt-of-mail and at times a hockey-club.

Thou becomest broken† in order to bear down the market of amber, and thou shakest thyself in order to bring down the price of musk.

Thou art not mad, why then dost thou roll on fire? Thou art not a moth, why then dost thou flutter round the candle?

When thou wantest to stroll, brocade forms thy path-way; and when thou wishest to recline, the red tulip is thy bed.

41. (ناصر خسرو علوی)

صبا باز با گل چه بازار دارد : که هموارش از خواب بیدار دارد
 برویش همی بر دمد مشک سارا : مگر راه بر طبلر عطّار دارد
 چو بیمارگون شد ز غم چشمِ نرگس : مر او را همی لاله تیار دارد
 نگه کن سحر گاه بر دشتِ سیمین : بزیّر اندرون دُرّ شہوار دارد
 کتون سبز گلبن عقیق و زمرد : ازیّت کنبند پر زرنگار دارد
 عروسِ بهاری کتون از بنفشه : بسر جعد و از لاله رخسار دارد
 نکویم که طاؤسِ نرّاست گلبن : که گلبن همی زین سخن عار دارد
 نه طاؤسِ نر راست بال از زمرد : نه از سرخ یاقوت منقار دارد
 نهاده بسر در چمن تاجِ نرگس : بدست اندرون کرده دینار دارد
 بنو روز مست است هر یاسمینی : نه یینی که سر چون نگونار دارد

What business hath the Breeze again with the Rose that it keeps her constantly awake?

On her face it bloweth the purest musk—mayhap it has passed through a perfume shop.

The eye of the Narcissus is sickly-hued through grief, and her the Tulip nurses with care.

At the time of the morn look at the silver-white field; pearls of inestimable worth it holds underneath.

Through the bounty of this bespangled dome, the green rose-bush now bears cornelian and emerald.

* Allusion to the curls like the rings of a chain-armour.

† Allusion to the wavy appearance.

Lo! the bride of Spring hath of violets the locks on the head,
and of tulip the face.

I may not say that the rose-bush is like the male peacock in
beauty, for such comparison would be humiliation to the rose-bush.

The peacock is not endowed with feathers of emerald, nor does
he possess a beak of red ruby.

Lo! in the garden the narcissus hath put on its crown, and
holdeth in the hand a piece of Dinâr.

At this time of the Naoroz festival the Jasmine has got intoxi-
cated—see you not how low she hangs her head?

42. *A Clever Compliment* (سعدی)

مرا راحت از زندگی دوش بود : که آن ماهرویم در آغوش بود
مرا و را چو دینم سراز خواب مست : بدو گفتم ای سرو پیش تو بست
دمی ز گس از خواب نوشین بشوی : چو گلین بخند و چو بلبل بگوی
چه می خسی ای فتنه روزگار : بیا و می لعل نوشتن ببار
نگه کرد شوریده در خواب و گفت : مرا فتنه خوابی و کوئی نخت
در ایام سلطان روشن نفس : نبیند مگر فتنه در خواب کس

Last night I had the bliss of life, for I had my sweetheart in
my arms. On seeing her eyes heavy with sleep, I said to her: "O
thou before whose form the Cypress is prostrate! For a while wash
out sweet sleep from thy Narcissus [*i.e.*, eyes]; laugh like the Rose
and sing like the Nightingale. Why sleepest thou, O Disturbance
of the times? Come, rouse thyself, and bring the delicious ruby
wine."

At me she looked, bewildered and drowsy, and replied, "You
call me 'Disturbance,' and tell me not to sleep. Know you not that
in the reign of our enlightened monarch Disturbance ever sleepeth?"

43.

آن زلف چو شب که دلپسند افتاد است : از قدر چو سروش چو کند افتاد است
گفتم که چرا شکسته از سر تا یاست : فرمود که از جای بلند افتاد است

Those dark ringlets of hers that are pleasing to every one, hang
like a noose from her cypress-like form. I asked her, "Why are
they broken-limbed* from top to bottom?" She replied, "Because
they have fallen from a *high* place."

* An allusion to their wavy appearance.

QUAINT DAINTIES.

—:0:—

1. (صائب)

در آن گلشن که آید در سخن لعلِ گهر بارش :
ز شبنم آبِ حسرت غنچه ها را در دهان گیرد :

In that rose-garden where her pearl-scattering rosy lips came into speech, the water of envy, in the form of dew-drops, collects in the mouth of the rose-buds.

2. (سپلی)

بروزِ بیکسی جز سایه من نیست یارِ من : ولی آن هم ندارد طاقتِ شبهای تاری من

In the day of adversity there is no one my friend except my shadow, and that too cannot withstand my nights of gloom!

[A playful allusion to there being no shadow in total darkness.]

3. (میر عبدالقادر)

یکی گردشِ چشم کرد آسمان : سیاهیِ نهان شد سفیدیِ عیان

The Sky turned up its eyes—the dark part became hidden and the white appeared. [Allusion to day-break.]

4. (میرزا نظام شیرازی)

گر فلک با من هم آغوشش نباید دور نیست :
باغبان بر چوبِ بندد گلبنِ نوحیز را :

If the heavens were to place her in my embrace, it would not be amiss, for the gardener ties to a stick the newly growing rose-branch.

5. (بیگم عفتی)

قامتِ سرو که در آب نمودار شده : کرده دعویِ بقدر یار و نگونسار شده

See the stature of the cypress as it is reflected in the water. It had the presumption to emulate the stature of the Beloved, and therefore it is thus upside down.

6. (آقا محمد عاشق اصفهانی)

فروشد چو در آبِ غواصِ گردون : گهرها در آمد ز دریای اخضر

When the diver of the sky (*i.e.*, the Sun) plunged into the water, out of the azure sea came out pearls (*i.e.*, the stars).

7.

زلف را گفتم سیاه چونى بخود پیچید و گفت : هر که با خورشید بنشیند شود رنگش سیاه

I asked the ringlets (of my sweetheart) why they were black. They writhed and said, "Whosoever is exposed to the *Sun* (i.e., her cheeks) becomes of dark hue."

8.

دلخسته را تمیز به آه و فغان کنند : ظرف شکسته را بصدا امتحان کنند

A person with a wounded heart (i.e., a lover) can be recognised by his sighs and groans, just as a cracked vessel is known by the sound it makes.

9.

از خوشی گوهر مقصود می آید بدست : هیچ غواصی نکرد آنکس که پاس دم نداشت

Pearls of desire can be obtained through silence. No one can dive for pearls who cannot *keep his breath*.

10.

چشم ارباب کرم در جستجوی سایل است : ز انتظار جام باشد گردن مینا بلند

The eyes of generous persons are on the look-out for one in need of assistance. It is in expectation of the cup that the neck of the wine flask is long.

11.

اگر کلام نه از آسمان فرود آید : چرا به هر سخنی خامه در سجود آید

If 'Words' had not their origin in Heaven, how is it that at every word the pen has to go through a prostration?

12.

بر تواضعهای دشمن تکیه کردن ابلهست : پای بوسه سبل از پا افتند دیوار را

It is folly to be deceived by the obsequiousness of the enemy. When the flood kisses the foot of a wall, it brings it down.

13.

گر بگذرم بخاطر یاک تو باک نیست : خاشاک بین که بر سر دریا گذر کنند

If an occasional thought of me cross your mind, there would be nothing wrong in it, for the weeds are to be seen floating on the bosom of the ocean.

14.

عاشق من و معشوق بکامِ دگران است : چون غرّة شوال که عیدِ رمضان است

It is I who am her lover, but my sweetheart bestows her favours on *others*, as the first day of the month of *Sharwāl* is called the Eid of the other month, Ramazân.

15.

لا تُقِرْ محفل نباشد هر که خندد بی محل
کفش چون دندان ناید می کنند از پاش دور :

A man who laughs out of season does not deserve to be given a seat in an assembly. When shoes begin to *show their teeth*, they are flung aside.

16. (صائب)

دهنِ خویش بدشنام میالا هرگز : که زِ لبِ بهر کس که دهی باز دهد

Never foul thy mouth with abuse, for a counterfeit coin, to whomsoever you pass it, will be returned to you.

17. (قاسم کاهی)

بروزِ هجر مرا دیده بس گهر بارست : شبی که ماه نباشد ستاره بسیارست

On the night of separation there is a copious shower of pearls from mine eyes—aye, the stars are numerous on the night when there is no moon.

18. (سنائی)

آتش در دلِ من شعله بر افروخته بود : دیده گر آبِ نبي ریخت دلم سوخته بود

Love had set my heart ablaze. Had not mine eyes poured water, the heart would have been consumed.

19.

مندان را حرصِ زرباقیست تا روزِ حساب : تشنه آخر تشنه خیزدگر کشد دریا بخواب

Rich people will be covetous so long as the world will last. A thirsty man will still be thirsty, even though in his dreams he swallow the whole ocean.

20. (سلیم)

هر کس که زیر تیغ برویت نظاره کرد : زان بیشتر که کشته شود خون بها گرفت

Whosoever looked at your beautiful face when his head was under the sword, received beforehand the blood-money for his death.

21. (هلالی)

ای که می پرسی ز من آن ماه را منزل کجاست
منزل او در دل است اما ندانم دل کجاست

O thou who askest me where the abode is of that moon-like beauty, know that her abode is in my heart, but I know not where my heart is.

22. (ملاً عبدالباقی)

ای قدم تنهاده هرگز از دل تنگم برون : حیرتی دارم که چون در هر دلی جا کرده

O thou who hast never set thy foot outside of *my* little heart, I wonder how thou art able to dwell in *every* heart.

23. (فنائی)

افتاده بیا زلفِ سمن سای تو از چیست : دیوانه منم سلسله در پای تو از چیست

What for have those long jessamine-scented ringlets fallen on your feet? It is *I* who am mad; why is there a chain on *your* feet?

24. (خافانی)

تا آئینه جالِ تو دید و تو حسنِ خویش : تو عاشقِ خودی ز تو عاشقِ تر آئینه

Since the mirror saw your beauty, and you your own loveliness, you have been in love with yourself, and the mirror is more in love with you than you are.

25. (سنائی)

چون موی شدم ز رشکِ پیراهن تو : وز رشکِ گریبان تو و دامن تو
کین بوسه همی دهد قدمهای ترا : وان را شب و روز دست درگردن تو

Jealousy has made me thin like a hair. I am jealous of your shirt, of your neck-scarf, and of the skirt of your robe; for the last has the honour of kissing the ground on which you tread, and the first two have their arms round your neck day and night.

26. (فصیحی هروی)

هزار بار قسم خورده ام که نامِ ترا : بلب نیاورم اما قسم بنامِ تو بود

I have a thousand times sworn that I would never utter your name, but it was your name that I swore by.

27. (مظفر هروی)

مه بدر نایب چو ز خورشید شود دور : من کز تو شوم دور نمایم چو هلالی

The moon, when it is at its greatest distance from the sun, is a *full moon*; but the further I go from you, the more like the *crescent* I appear.

28. (نادم)

کشتی مرا و کشته شد از رشک عالمی :
هر خون که می کنی تو بصد خون برابر است :

You have killed *me*, and out of envy for my good fortune a *multitude* have died. Hence, every life that you take is equivalent to a massacre of hundreds.

29. (نادم)

بر مرادِ دوست با صد مدّعی سر می کنم : بهر یک بت سجدهٔ یک شهر کافر می کنم

At the desire of my sweetheart I have to bear with hundreds of my rivals. For the sake of one idol, I have to bend the knee to a cityful of infidels.

30. (ضمیری)

چو بر خیزد ز خوابِ ناز و بیند سوی خود رویم :
بهانه چشم مالیدن کند تا ننگرد سویم :

When she awakes from her nap and sees that I am gazing at her, she pretends to rub her eyes in order that she may not have to look towards me.

31. (کمال الدین اسمعیل)

چشم گل شگفته و اشکم گلاب گرم : هرگز مباد کس چو من اندر گل و گلاب

My eyes are like expanded roses (*i.e.*, very red with weeping), and my tears like warm rose-water. May no one ever be in roses and rose-water as I am!

32. (ملولی)

طرفه حالبت که آن آتش سوزان از من :
دور تر آنچه رود بیشترم می سوزد :

It is a strange circumstance, that the further that kindler of hearts goes away from me, the more does she make me burn.

33. (ادم کاشانی)

- کس را نبینم روز غم جز سایه در پهلوی خود
آن هم چو بینم سوی او گرداند از من روی خود

In the time of affliction I see no one at my side except my shadow, and that too turns away its head from me when I turn to look at it.

34. (نشانی دهلوی)

- مرا هر شب چو دزد خواب گردد چشم تر گردد
دل را با غمت بیدار بیند باز بر گردد

Every night that the thief of sleep prowls round my tearful eyes, it sees my heart awake on account of thy love, and has to turn back.

35.

حسنِ مه را با تو سنجیدم بیزان از کین : پلّه مه بر فلک رفته تو ماندی بر زمین

I secretly weighed in the balance the beauty of the moon against yours. The scale of the moon went up to the sky, while yours remained on the ground.

36. (صائب)

- دزدی بوسه عجب دزدی خوش عاقبت است
که اگر باز ستانند دو چندات گردد

Stealing a kiss is a wonderful theft, one of good consequences; for if the kiss be taken back, it becomes double.

37.

بوسه بمن دادی و رنجیده : باز ستان کر نه پسندیده

You have given me a kiss, and are now sorry for it. Well, take it back if you approve not of your having given it.

38. (خاقانی)

تا چشم تو ریخت خون عشاق : زلف تو گرفت رنگِ ماتم

Ever since your eyes killed your lovers, your ringlets have put on the colour of mourning.

39. (ابوالفرج رونی)

گفتم که ز خردی دل من نیست پدید : اندوه بزرگ تو در او چون گنجید
گفتا که ز دل بدیده باید نگرید : خرد است بدو بزرگها بتوان دید

I said to her: "My heart is too small to be visible: how is it able to contain my love for you, which is so great?"

She replied: "From the heart turn thy attention to the eye: it is small, but large objects can be seen with it."

40. (فردوسی)

گریزی به هنگام با سر بجای : به از پهلوانی و سر زیر پای

Flying from the battle-field and keeping the head on the shoulders, is better than showing heroic courage and having the head rolling under the feet of men.

41.

بمستی داشت قصد کشتن من چشم شهلاش

قدش برخاست بهر عذر و زلف افتاد در پایش

In a drunken freak her bewitching eyes wanted to kill me, but to plead my cause her stature got up, and her ringlets fell at her feet.

42.

جمع دل موقوف بر جمعیت اسباب نیست

با وجود آب و دانه آسیا در گردش است

Collectedness of mind depends not on the possession of goods. The flour mill in spite of its having *grain and water** has to go round and round.

43.

آسمان در دهر دانات را کند دائم مدد

زان سبب انگشت کوچک صاحب انگشتریست

The sky in its revolutions always aids low people. It is for this reason that the smallest finger is the oftenest adorned with rings.

44.

نا کسی گر از کسی بالا نشیند عیب نیست

زانکه خس بالای دریا زیر دریا گوهر است

If in an assembly, a worthless fellow sits higher than a worthy man, it matters not; for in the sea, the weeds are always at the top and the pearls at the bottom.

* A term often used for 'means of livelihood.'

45.

اگر تو باغ باشی گل شوم من : و اگر تو گل شوی بلبل شوم من
و اگر تو شیشه باشی مل شوم من : و اگر تو مل شوی قلقل شوم من

If you become a garden, I will become a rose; and if you become a rose, then I will be your Bulbul.

If you become a flask, I will be your wine; and if you become wine, then I will be your gurgling sound.

46.

اگر خواهی عزیز مردمان باشی تواضع کن
که جای ابروان بالای چشم است از خمیدن

If you wish to be popular bow to every one; for the eyebrows enjoy a higher position than the eyes owing to their *bowing* so much.

47. (نورجهان) *

نمی دانم ز منع گریه مطلب چیست ناصح را
دل از من دیده از من آستین از من کنار از من

I know not what object my counsellor has in dissuading me from weeping, since mine is the heart and mine the eyes, mine the sleeve,† and mine the breast.§

48. (سعدی)

تهی پای رفتن به از کفش تنگ : بلای سفر به که در خانه جنگ

Walking barefoot is better than putting on shoes that pinch; better the hardships of a journey than quarrels at home.

49. (مولوی رومی)

چون بخارد پشت من انگشت من : خم شود از بارِ منتِ بشت من

When my fingers scratch my back, the latter bends down *under the load of the obligation*!

* Also attributed to میرزا محمد مازندرانی. Another reading of the second line is:

دل از من دیده از من اشک از من آستین از من

† Wherewith to wipe off the tears.

§ Whereon the tear-drops fall.

50. (ذوقی)

پیوند دوستداری اران یاره می کنم : تا باز بندم و بتو نزدیکتر شوم

For this reason I often sever the cord of friendship—that, by reuniting the pieces, I may get nearer* to thee.

51.

صد نامه نوشتیم و جوابی ننوشتی : این هم که جوابی ننویسند جوابست

We wrote a hundred letters, and you wrote not a single reply. When people send not a single reply, that is in itself a reply.

52.

کنم غوغا بهر بیگانه چون در کوی او بینم

که چون آید برون بهر تماشا روی او بینم

I make a fracas with every stranger that I see in her street, so that if she comes out to see the spectacle I may thus be able to see her face.

53 (حافظ)

هر ناله و فریاد که کردم نشنیدی : پیدا است نگارا که بلند است جنابت

No complaint or lamentation that I made did you ever hear; consequently it is plain, O my sweetheart, that yours must be a very *exalted* position.

54. (جلال الدین ملک شاه سلجوقی)

یوسی زد یار دوش بر دیده من : او رفت و ازو بهاند تر دیده من

زان داده بر این دیده نگاریم بوس : کو چهره خویش دیده در دیده من

Last night the beloved gave me a kiss on mine eyes. She went away, but because of her mine eyes remained moist. The reason for my charmer's kiss was that she saw her own face reflected in mine eyes.

55. (ارشادی سمرقندی)

کسی کز و هنر و عیب باز خواهی جست : بهانه ساز و بگفتارش اندر آر نخست
سفال را ز طیانچه زدن بیانگ آرند : بیانگ گردد پیدا شکستگی ز درست

If thou wouldst judge the merits and defects of any person contrive some means to make him speak. Earthenware is made to cry out by giving it a slap, and the cry reveals whether the pot is sound or cracked.

* For a string often cut and as often reunited becomes gradually shorter and shorter.

56. (امیر خسرو)

دنبالِ یارِ رفته روان کردم آبِ چشم : آن رفته خود نیامد و اشکم روان بماند

In the wake of my departed friend I sent the stream of my eyes; the departed one has not returned, but my tears keep up the pursuit.

57. (جامی)

دریم ز مژه کوکب بی ماهِ رخت شبها : تاریک شبی دارم با این همه کوکبا

At nights when I view not the moon of thy face, I shed stars from my eyelashes. What a dark night have I in spite of so many stars!

58. (شوق هندی)

گر رهد از شکن زلف اسیرِ ذقن است :

دلِ دیوانه گهی در چه و گه در رسن است :

My distracted heart, if it escapes from the coils of the ringlets, falls into the prison of the chin-pit: at times it is enmeshed in ropes, and at times it is in the well.

59. (وصال شیرازی)

اشکم ز سر گذشت همان سوزشم بجاست :

در حیرتم که سوختن من در آب چیست :

Though my tears have leaped all bounds, my heartburn remains the same as ever. I wonder how it happens that I keep burning when under water.

60. (کسائی مروزی)

من موی را نه از بی آن می کنم خضاب : تا باز نوجوان شوم و نو گنه کنم

مردم چو مو بایم بیری سیه کنند : من موی را ببرگِ جوانی سیه کنم

I dye my hair, but not with the view of again appearing youthful and indulging in vices anew. Since men darken their hair in sorrow for the advent of old age, I darken mine in grief for the death of youth.

61.

دشمنِ زندگیست موی سفید : روی دشمن سیاه باید کرد

White hair is the enemy of life: an enemy's face ought to be blackened.

62. (عاقل شاهجهانا بادی)

ریش سفید من نه سیاهست از خضاب : در ماتم شباب سیه پوش گشته ام

It is not the hair-dye that has darkened my white beard—rather, I have put on black, in mourning for departed youth.

63. (صائب)

گرفتم سالرا پنهان کنی با مو چه می سازی :
گرفتم موی را کردی سیه با رو چه می سازی :

Granted that you can conceal your years, what can you do with the hair? Granted that you can blacken your hair, what can you do with the face?

64. (مرزا طاهر وحید)

مگو که یر شدم شد جوانم کامل : چنان که میوه شود موسم خزان شیرین

Say not I have grown old; nay, my youth has become mature, just as fruit becomes sweet in autumn.

65. (کمال بخارائی)

سوار بود جوانی شتاب کرد و رفت : ز گرد مرکب او عارضم غبار گرفت

Youth was mounted on a horse, it went away in a hurry. It is from the dust thrown up by its steed that my cheeks have got their grey tint.

66.

بدست آور بپیری عمر ضایع کرده خود را :
که در شب هر چه گم شد روز روشن می توان جست :

In old age get in hand thy wasted life, for whatever is lost in the night can be sought for in the bright day.

[Night and day refer to dark hair and white hair.]

67. (حمید الدین جوهری مستوفی)

موئی که جوانی بشبه بنگارید : بیری شبه برد و در برو بگارید
گرد ز شبه به است پس چون بارید : از غم ز درین آن شبه مروارید

The hair that was decked with jet-beads by youth was adorned with pearls by Old Age, who removed the jet-beads. If pearls are better than jet, why do you shed pearls (i.e., tears) in sorrow for the removal of jet?

68. (معزّي)

با خار نیست نرگس و بی خار نیست گل : گویند مردمان و مرا استوار نیست
زیرا که گردِ نرگس تو هست خاها : گردِ گلِ شکفته تو هیچ خار نیست

People say that there is no narcissus with thorns, and no rose without a thorn, but I believe not what they say ; because thy narcissus [*i.e.*, eyes] is surrounded with thorns [*i.e.*, the eyelashes], while around thy blossomed rose [the cheeks] there is not a single thorn.

69. (شهریاری)

جانا ز رخت نمی گریزد چشم : نقشِ دگری نمی پذیرد چشم
این تشنه دیدارِ تو غرقست در آب : ترسم که در آب تشنه میرد چشم

Beloved! from thy face mine eyes cannot detach themselves, nor do they conceive any other image than thine. These twain, that are athirst for a view of thy face, are plunged in water: I am afraid that even in the midst of water they will die of thirst.

70. (امیر خسرو)

می روی و گریه می آید مرا : ساعتی بنشین که باران بگذرد

Thou art going, and this sets me weeping. Stay awhile *till* this shower passes off.

71. (کلیم)

با من آمیزشِ او الفتِ موجست و کنار : دم بدم با من و پیوسته گریزان از من

Her association with me is like the amity of the wave with the shore—time after time she is with me, and constantly receding from me.

72. (اسدی طوسی)

صراحی بگوشِ فدح برده سرش : پند و رازِ سر بسته گفتی مگر
ندانم چه گفتی چه انگیختی : که گفتی و از دیده خون ریختی

The wine-flask, with head bent over the ear of the cup, was perhaps communicating some close secret: I know not what it said and what emotions were stirred up so that while it spake it shed tears of blood.

73. (سلطان ابو سعید ابوالخیر)

عشق آمد و کردِ فتنه بر جانم بیخت : عقالم شد و هوش رفت و دانش بگریخت
زین واقعه هیچ دوست دستم نگرفت : جز دیده که هر چه داشت در پایم ریخت

Love came and strewed on my soul the dust of tumult. Reason went, Sense departed, and Wisdom fled. In such state no friend extended to me a helping hand, save mine Eyes, who poured at my feet whatsoever they possessed.

74. (صائب)

طمع بوسه از آن لعلِ شکر خا دارم : خیر از خانه در بسته تمنا دارم

I yearn for a kiss from those ruby-red sugar lips; aye, I am hoping for a dole from a house with locked doors!

75. (میر ابوالقاسم قند زیگی)

یک بوسه از رخت ده و یک بوسه از لب
تا هر دو را چشیده بگویم کدام به

Allow me once to kiss thy cheeks and once to kiss thy lips, so that, having tasted both, I can decide which kiss is better!

76. (رفیقا)

مریضی که از عشق تب می کنند : علاجش دو عتابِ لب می کند

For him who suffers from the fever of Love the remedy consists of the two jujubes of the beloved's lips.

77. (محمد رضا خوانساری)

چون گلرخان بجانبِ عشاق رو کنند : صد چاکِ دل بتارِ نگاهی رفو کنند

When the rose-cheeked damsels turn their faces towards the lovers, they darn a hundred rents in the heart with a single thread of their glance.

78. (صائب)

رویت بزلفِ بر چین تسخیرِ ملکِ دل کرد
فتحی چنین که کرده با لشکرِ شکسته

Your face has conquered the kingdom of the heart with the help of the curly ringlets. Who ever made such conquest with a scattered army?

79. (ظهر فاریابی)

خود از برای سر زره از بهر تن بود : تو جنگجوی عادتِ دیگر نهاده
در بر گرفته دل چون خود آهنت : وان زلف چون زره را بر سر نهاده

The helmet is meant for the head, and chain-armour for the body, but thou, O warlike Beauty, hast a different mode of putting them on. In thy bosom thou hast a heart like the iron helmet, and on thy head thou wearest the chain-armour of ringlets.

80. (صائب)

ریخت چون دندان امید زندگی بی حاصل است :
می رسد بازی به آخر مهره چون بر چیده شد :

When the teeth have fallen off, the hope for long-life is futile. The game is over when the chess-pieces are swept off the board.

81. (محمد جان قدسی)

بوی ترا يك صبحدم گر باد آرد در چمن :
گل غنچه گردد تا کنند بوی تو پنهان در بغل :

If on a morning the breeze conveys thy fragrance to the garden, the rose again becomes a bud in order to enfold thy smell in its bosom.

82. (بنائی هروی)

خواهم غبار کردم در کوی او بر آیم : تا هر که بیند او را در چشم او در آیم

I wish to become dust and to be in her street, so that if any one dare to look into her face I may enter into his eyes.

83. (میرزا ییدل)

صاحب تسلیم را هر کس تواضع می کند : گر کنی يك سجده پیدا می شود محرابها

To a courteous man every one shows politeness. If you make one prostration, arches will become manifest.

[i.e. Others will bow too. There is also an allusion to the Arch in the mosque, towards which the face is turned in praying.]

84. (میرزا ییدل)

چشت بخلط سوي من انداخت نگاهی : تیری که ازین شست خطا شد چه بجا شد

Your eyes cast a glance at me through inadvertence. How well has the random shaft from this bow hit the mark!

85. (حافظ)

- اشکِ غمازم اگر سرخ بر آید چه عجب ۛ
خجل از کرده خود پرده دری نیست که نیست ۛ

If my tell-tale tears come out red it is no wonder, for there is no betrayer of secrets who does not blush with shame for his misdeeds!

86. (شیدا)

- حسنت فرود و آبِ دو چشم فرود از او ۛ
افزاید آبِ بحر ز افزایشِ قمر ۛ

Your beauty has increased, and hence has increased the water of my eyes. The tide of the ocean swells in volume with the waxing of the moon.

87. (میر بجائی کاشی)

- ای که از دشواریِ راهِ فنا ترسی مترس ۛ
بس که آسان است این ره می توان خوابید و رفت ۛ

O thou who art afraid of the hardships of the journey to Eternity, fear not; the way is so easy that one can go there sleeping.

88. (امید)

- دیده گریان می شود آهی چو از دل می کشم ۛ
آری آری راست باشد بادِ باران آورد ۛ

My eyes fall to weeping whenever I heave a sigh from my heart. Aye, aye, this is but proper, for the wind brings rain.

89. (حافظ)

- مردم دیده تیمم کنند از خاکِ درت ۛ گرچه در خانه خود آبِ روانی دارد

The pupil of my eye performs its dry ablution* with the dust at thy door, although in its own house it has a stream of running water.

[* When water cannot be had, ablution with dry sand is permissible, and this is called 'dry ablution.']

90. (خواجه سعد گل)

ترازو در کفِ بقال و من در صورتش حیران
 بیا ای مشتری بنگر قر در خانه میزان

The scales are in the hand of the grocer, and I am struck all of a heap at his beauty. Come, O buyer, see the Moon is in Libra!

[There is a pun on مشتری which means 'a buyer' as well as 'the planet Jupiter.' Also میزان means 'a pair of scales,' as well as 'the Zodiacal sign Libra.']

91. (صوفی مازندرانی)

هر نفس دست تو در گردن خود می بیند
 آن چه اقبال بلند است که مینا دارد

What a splendid lot is that of the wine-flask, that has thy hand so often round its neck!

92. (صائب)

سفلۀ خوش بوش را بر مسند خود جامده
 کفش کر زین بود بر سر نمی باید نهاد

Give not the seat of honour to a vile man howsoever richly clad; the shoes, though they be golden, may not be placed on the head.

93. (حمیدالدین هندی)

از بهر قطع کردن نخل حیات من
 چون اره دو دم نفس اندر کشاکش است

In order to cut down the tree of my existence the breath, like a saw worked by two men, is pulling this way and that way.

94. (مالی شیرازی)

بعد وصف آن میان ذکر دهانش مشکل است
 در قلم چون مو بگیرد نقطه توات نهاد

'After praising that waist it is difficult to describe the mouth. A pen that has got a hair in the nib cannot mark a point.

[It is the fashion of the poets to call the waist a hair, and the mouth a dot or point.]

95.

آن غنچه که گل گشت دگر غنچه نگردد
 ویت طرفه لب یار گهی غنچه گهی گل

The bud that has blossomed into a rose does not become bud again; but wonderful are the lips of the beloved, that are at times a bud, and at times a rose.

96.

یار باید سروقد آمانه چندان سروقد : کز برای بوسه او نردبان باید نهاد

The beloved should be of cypress-like stature, it is true, but not so tall that to kiss her a ladder would be required!

97.

ریش باید دوسه موئی که ز نخدان بوشی :
نه که در سایه او بجه دهد خرگوشی :

A beard should consist of a few hairs just sufficient to cover the chin, and not so bushy that under its shelter a rabbit can litter.

98. (هائی)

گر ز بی مهری مرا از شهر بیرون می کنی :
دل که در کوی تو می ماند باو چون می کنی :

Me you can unkindly banish the city, but to my heart, which will remain in your street, what can you do?

99. (بنائی هروی)

بیرون میا ز خانه که ذوق امید وصل :
بهر ز دید نیست که بیهوشی آورد :

Come not forth from the house, for the bliss which is in the hope of union is better than vision that brings about insensibility.

100. (ندائی نیشاپوری)

من شمع جان گدازم تو صبح جان فزائی : سوزم گرت نینم میرم چو رخ نائی

I am the self-consuming candle and thou art the life-nourishing morn. I burn when I see thee not, and I die when thou showest thy face.

[The allusion is to the candle burning (or being alight) so long as there is no morn, and dying (or being extinguished) when morn appears.]

101. (نظام استرابادی)

با صد هزار دیده بگرد جهان سپهر : جویای آدمیت ولی آدمی بکاست

With a hundred thousand eyes is the sphere revolving round the world, looking for one worthy to be called Man, but where is that Man?

102. (آفتابی ساوجی)

بیاری من چون سببِ پرشش اوشد : من میرم ازین غم که چرا بهترم امروز

As my illness was the cause of her making enquiries after my health, I am dying from the grief of being better in health to-day!

103. (عالی)

نه گلابست این که بر رخسارِ مهوش می زند :

تا نسوزد عالی آبی بر آتش می زند :

It is not rose-water that she sprinkles on her lovely cheek : it is water that she dashes on fire to prevent the world burning.

[The ruddy cheek is the fire. There is play on the word عالی which means 'a world' and is also the poet's name.]

104. (سلیمان ساوجی)

افتاد دوش دل بغمِ زلفِ شاهدهی : شب بود و ره دراز همان جا فروکشید

Last night the heart got entangled in the coils of a charmer's ringlets. It was night, and the way was long, so it put up at the very place.

[The blackness of the locks is referred to by 'the night,' and their length by the distance to be traversed.]

105. (عاقل شاهجهانابادی)

گر ندارد انفعالِ سخت حاجت خواستن : دست پیش رو چرا وقتِ دعا دارد کسی

If it be not from a feeling of great shame in preferring a request, why doth one keep the hands in front of the face while praying?

106. (محمد قلی خات کازرونی)

خال بکنج لب یکی طرّه مشک فام دو :: وای بجال مرغ دل دانه یکی و دام دو

The mole at the corner of her lips is one, while the musk-coloured tresses are two. Alas for the state of the bird of the heart! Grain there is one, and snares there are two!

107. (منوچهری)

از آن سنگین دلش خیزدهمی خونین سرشک من ::
بدین معنی درست آمد که یاقوت از حجر خیزد ::
بدنداننش نگه کردم دو چشم من چو دریا شد ::
مرا دریا ز گوهر خاست وز دریا گهر خیزد ::

My blood-red tears spring from her stony heart, and thus it is verified that the ruby has its origin in stone. I looked at her teeth, and my two eyes became seas: in my case the sea has its parentage in pearls, although pearls are the product of the sea.

SATIRE AND EPIGRAMS.

—————:0:—————

1. *Firdousi's epigram on Sultan Mahmood.*

خجسته در گه محمود غزنوی دریاست : چگونه دریا کانرا کرانه پیدا نیست
چه غوطها زدم و اندر او ندیدم در : گناه بخت من است این گناه دریا نیست

* 'Tis said our monarch's liberal mind
Is like the ocean unconfined;
Happy are they who prove it so,
'Tis not for me that truth to know.
I've plunged within its waves, 'tis true,
But not a single pearl could view.

2. The poet Jamáluddin of Isfahán, an admirer of the poet Kháqány, once, while in a merry mood, sent the following lines to the latter.

[The concluding portion of the poem, which is in a different vein, is omitted.]

کیست که پیغام من بشهر شروان برد : يك سخن از من بدان مرد سخندان برد
گوید خاقانیا این همه ناموس چیست : نه هر که دویست گفت لقب ز خاقان برد
کسی بدین مایه علم دعوی دانش کند : کسی بدین قدر فضل نام بزرگان برد
تخته فرستی ز شعر سوی عراق ایش چهل : هیچ کس از زیرکی زیره بکرمان برد
شعر فرستادت دانی مانند بچه : مور که پای ملخ پیش سلیمان برد
نظم گهر سر بر گفته خود گیر تو : کس گهر از بهر سود باز به عمان برد
یا نه چنان گو که هست سحر حلال این سخن : سحر کسی خود بر موسی عمران برد
کس به بر آفتاب نور چراغ آورد : یا به بر ماهتاب خلعت کتان برد
مسجد اندر سگان هیچ خردمند بست : بکعبه اندر بتان هیچ مسلمان برد
زشت بود روز عید گر ز بی چابکی : پیر زنی خر سوار گوی ز میدان برد
هنوز گویندگان هستند اندر عراق : که قوت ناطقه سجده بایشان برد
یکی از ایشان منم که چون کنم رای نظم : سجده بر طبع من روان حسان برد
من ز تو احمق ترم تو ز من ابله تری : کسی بیاید که ما هر دو یزندان برد
من و تو باری کیتم ز شاعران جهان : که خود کسی نام ما ز جمع ایشان برد
وه که چه خنده زنند بر من و تو کودکان : اگر کسی شعر ما سوی خراسان برد

* Beale's *Oriental Biography*.

Who is there to take my message to the city of Sherwán¹—a word from me to the learned man there? I want him to say—“O Kháqány, what is this notoriety that you have got? Is it fitting that any man who can make a verse or two should connect his cognomen with the Kháqán²? Can any one, with the stock of knowledge that you have, lay claim to wisdom? Can any one, with your modicum of acquirements, assume the name of great men? You send a *present*³ of your verses to Iráq—what folly! Does any sensible man carry *cumin-seed*⁴ to Kerman? Do you know what your sending of verses resembles?—the ant’s bringing the leg of the locust to Solomon! Even suppose that your utterances are like a string of pearls; does any one take back pearls to the *sea of Ommán*⁵ for making profit? Or, suppose that your poem is like lawful magic; does any one dare to carry sorcery to Moses, the son of Amrán? Does any one bring to the Sun the light of a lamp? Or does any one take to the Moon a garment of *flax*⁶? Does any wise man tie dogs inside a mosque? Does any Mussulman take idols to the temple of Ka’abah? On the day of Eid, when races are run, it would be a crying shame were an old woman, riding on a donkey, to win the race. In Iráq there are still some poets left, before whom the Reasoning Faculty bends in adoration. One of those am I, such that when I take to writing verses, the spirit of Hassán⁷ doth homage to my poetic genius.

I am more foolish than thou; thou art more stupid than I. Some one is wanted, who can take both of us to prison. What position have we, you and I, in the ranks of the poets of the world, that we should expect our names to be in the same list with theirs? How will the boys laugh at both of us, if our verses are taken by some one to Khorásán!”

1. The birth-place of Kháqány.

2. The name ‘Kháqány’ implies belonging to the ‘Kháqán’ or the ‘Emperor.’

3. An allusion to a poem of Kháqány, which is called تحفة العراقين “A present to the two Iráqs.”

4. An expression equivalent to “carrying coals to Newcastle.”

5. A place well-known for its pearl fisheries.

6. An allusion to the belief that flax growing in fields becomes decomposed on moonlit nights.

7. An Arabian poet who was a contemporary of the Prophet.

3.

Sultan Toghrul III, the last of the Seljookian dynasty, was defeated in a battle, taken prisoner, and executed by Takash Khan, ruler of Khwàrizm. His head was sent to the Khalif of Baghdad, while his body remained in the camp of the Khan. This was the occasion for the following epigram by a poet:—

امروز شها زمانه دل تنگیست : فیروزه چرخ هر زمان بر رنگیست
دی از سر تو تا بفلک یک گز بود : امروز ز سر تا بدنت فرسنگیست

To-day, O King, is the time of woe! The turquoise of the sky changeth its hue from time to time.

Yesterday thy head was only a yard lower than the sky, and to-day between thy head and thy body leagues intervene.

4. *On the death of a tyrant.* (تاج الدین سرخی)

در ماتم آن قوم که خون می بارند : مرگ تو حیات خویش می پندارند
غمناک از آنند که تا دوزخیان : جاوید چگونه با تو صحبت دارند

Those people, who shed blood-red tears in grief at thy death, do in reality regard thy death as a new lease of their life. Their grief is because of their concern as to how the denizens of Hell will be able to endure thy company eternally!

5.

Lines on Kazi Majduddin Tawil of Hamadàn by اثیر الدین آوقانی

نه ازین داشت قضا مرگ وی اندر تاخیر :
که بریدر اجلاس می ننماید تعجیل :
لیک در تیه ضلالت نه چنان کم گشتست :
که بصد سال برد ره پسرش عزرائیل :

“Not because the messenger of his fate lacked insistence did Destiny delay his death, but he is so utterly lost in the desert of error that Azrâil cannot find the way to him in a hundred years.”
[Tr. of Prof. E. G. Browne.]

6. (رشیدی سمرقندی)

تو وزیری و منت مدحت گوی : دست من بی عطا روا بینی
تو وزارت بمن سپار و مرا : مدحتی گوی تا عطا بینی

You are a wazier, and I am your panegyrist; but you have thought it fit to keep me without any token of your generosity.

Entrust to me the waziership awhile, and say something in my praise, so that you may see what generosity is.

7. (کال الدین اسمعیل)

دی اسپ مرا گفت که در این چه شک است
 کاصطبل تو از زاویه های فلک است
 نه آب در آن نه سبزه نه کاه نه جو
 این جای ستور نیست جای ملک است

Yesterday my horse said to me, "There is no doubt that your stable is one of the corners of Heaven. There is not to be seen in it water, or grass, or hay, or oats;—it is not a place for a beast, but one for an angel!"

8 (ملا مراد)

ای مولوی از کبر دماغت کنده :: گاهی که کنند بر تو سلام این بنده
 چندان حرکت نیا که از روی قیاس :: معلوم شود که مرده یا زنده

O Moulvi, who art inflated with pride! when I salute thee, at least make a slight gesture, just sufficient for me to decide whether thou art alive or dead.

9. (خواجه نصیر)

نظام بی نظام ار گافرم خواند :: چراغ کذب را نبود فروغی
 مسلمان خوانش زیرا که نبود :: سزاوار دروغی جز دروغی

If the mismanaging minister of state affairs calls me an infidel it matters not—the lamp of his lie giveth no light. I will, in return, call him one of the true faith, for a lie can best be met with another lie.

10. (جامی)

شاعری خواند بر خلل غزلی :: کین بحذف الف بود موصوف
 گفته ام نیست صنعتی به ازان :: که کنی حذف ازان تمام حروف

A poet read to me a very bad *Ghazal*, saying he had taken care to avoid words having the letter 'alif' in it.

I said to him, "Your poem would have been highly artistic, had you avoided *all* the letters of the alphabet."

11. (جای)

On seeing a man with a very big nose, who was engaged in prayers.

هر لحظه سجده تو نه از بهر طاعت است : بارِ گران ز بینی خود بر زمین نهی

Your frequent prostrations are not due to the requirements of the prayers you are engaged in ; they serve as pretexts for you to lay on the ground the heavy burden of your nose.

12.

Lines of the poet Moulana Tooty (the literal meaning of whose name is—'a parrot') on the nose of the poet Badihi of Bokhárá.

هر پردۀ بینی بدیهی غاریست : طوطی منم و ترا عجب متقاریست

Badihi, each of thy nostrils is a large cavern. Although it is I who am called a parrot, it is thou who hast a most wonderful beak.

13. (جمال الدین اصفهانی)

Lines to a patron.

ای کریمی که دایم منت را : کرم و بخشش تو دانه ماست
از تو ما را شکایتیست لطیف : وان نه از تست کز زمانه ماست
آن چه می بود کم فرستادی : که همه شهر بر فسانه ماست
اگر آنرا شراب شاید خواند : چای ما پس شرابخانه ماست

O thou charitable one, whose generosity and gifts are our bait in the snare of obligation, we have a delicate complaint to make of thee, or rather, not of thee but of our fortune. What kind of wine was it that thou didst send us and thus madest us the talk of the town? If that liquid can be called Wine, then, verily, our well is our wine-cellar!

14. (شهاب تر شیزی)

ز بهر تاختن در وادی هجو : سمندر طبع را چون رام کردم
ترا خر خواندم و گشتم بشیان : که آن بیچاره را بدنام کردم

When I mounted the horse of my mind to gallop in the field of satire, I called thee an Ass, and I repent of it: for I have libelled the poor animal!

15. (شهاب ترشیزی)

آن کلاتر ز عزیز ی پرسید : که مرا آرزوی خر باشد
 زین خران جله کدامین بخرم : گفت آن خر که کلاتر باشد

The alderman asked of a friend, "As I am in need of an ass, from this herd of asses which one would you recommend me to buy?" He replied: "The ass that is the biggest" or "the ass that is the alderman!"

[Here there is a pun on the word کلاتر which means 'bigger', as well as, 'alderman.']

16. (شاه طهماسب صفوی)

اصفهان جَنَّتِست یر نعمت : هر چه دروی گان بری شاید
 همه چیزش نکوست الا آنک : اصفهانی در آت نمی باید

Isfahân is a paradise full of blessings, and it deserves whatever high opinion you may form of it. All its things are good, but—the Isfahâni is not wanted there!

17. (اسکاف مروزی)

گرچه او راست کسوتِ زیبا : و رچه ما راست خرقه رسوا
 ما چو مغزیم در میانه جوز : او چو هسته ست در دلِ خرما

Though he has fine garments and we have only shabby clothes, we are like the kernel inside the nut, and he is like the stone inside the date-fruit.

18. (کمال الدین اسمعیل)

گر خواجه ز بهر ما بدی گفت : ما چهره ز غم نمی خراشیم
 ما غبیر نکوئی اش نکوئیم : تا هر دو دروغ گفته باشیم

If the Khwâjah speaks ill of us, we do not scratch our face in grief. We say nothing but good of him; so that we both may be telling untruths.

Another reading of the above lines is as under:—

شخصی بدِ ما بخلق می گفت : ما از بدِ او نمی خراشیم
 ما نیکوِ او بخلق گفتیم : تا هر دو دروغ گفته باشیم

19.

Lines of Shah Shujā'a on the death of his brother, who was his rival for the throne:—

محمود برادر من شد شیر کمین : می کرد خصومت از پی تاج و نگین
کردیم دو بخش تا یاساید ملک : او زیر زمین گرفت و من روی زمین

My brother Mahmood, the king who was like a crouching lion, was at strife with me for the possession of the crown. We made two equal divisions, so that the kingdom might rest in peace—he took the portion underneath the earth, and I the one above ground.

20. (ملا شیدا)

A lampoon on the poet طالب کلیم

شب و روز نغدومنا طالبا : پی جیفه دنیوی در تگست
مگر قول یغبرش یاد نیست : که دنیاست مردار و طالب سگست

Night and day our master Tālib is running after this carcass of the world. Perhaps he remembers not the maxim of the Prophet—
"This world is a carrion and he who hankers after it is a dog."

[Here there is a pun on the poet's name Tālib, so the last phrase also means "and Tālib is a dog!"]

21. (کاتبی نیشاپوری)

خسروا از خورد و پوش من نداری آگهی :
چون نباشد هر دم از تو ناله و افتان مرا :
نیستم کعبه که در سالی دهی يك جامه ام :
یا نیم گردون که روزی بس بود يك نان مرا :

Thou, O king, art not aware of what I get for food and raiment; why should I not, therefore, be loud in my complaint of thee? I am not the holy Ka'abah that thou shouldst give me only one piece of garment* per year, nor am I the sky that one loaf of bread† per day should suffice for me.

* A reference to the covering of the Ka'abah which is annually presented by the Khalif on the occasion of the Eid of Pilgrimage.

† This is a reference to the Sun which is usually compared to a round loaf of bread.

22.

Qumi and Zahoori, two poets of the court of Sultan Âdilshah of Bijapur, had each written a poem in imitation of the *Makhzan-ul-asrâr* of Nizâmi, and had been handsomely rewarded. Another poet ذہنی کاشی, who had a very poor opinion of the two poets, expressed it thus:—

در مدح و ثنایت ای شهنشاهِ دکن : معذورم دار کر نه گفتم سخن
میسند که بہر یک شتر زرگیرم : خونِ دو ہزار بیتِ بد در گردن

O King of the Deccan, excuse me for not writing in thy praise a poem like the *Makhzan*. Approve it not that for the sake of a camel-load of gold I should have to my charge the murder of two thousand verses !

23. (کمال الدین اسمعیل)

غله کامسال داد خواجہ مرا : کر نه ' بد جله بود اکثر خاک
نسبتِ خاک و کندمش باہم : همچنان ' بد کہ تخم اندر خاک
خاک مردم خورد ندانستم : کہ خورد مردم ای برادر خاک

The corn that the Khwâjah gave me this year was for the most part, if not wholly, earth. The ratio of wheat to earth was just that of the grain sown to the soil with which it is covered. The earth consumes men [after death], but, O brother, I did not know that men can eat earth !

24.

مدارای مردانِ ایران زمین : دو فنجانِ قہوہ ست و یک آفرین

The civility of the people of Iran consists of two cups of coffee, and one " Bless you ! "

25. (جعفر زلی)

از بہشتِ جاودان ما را بہ ہند انداختی
ہمچو ہند ار داشتی دوزخ چرا ہم ساختی

Lord ! From a perpetual paradise Thou hast driven us into India. Since Thou hadst a place like India, what need was there for creating Hell ?

26. (مولا ناشیلی)

دی سگی را رقیب می زد چوب :: سگ همی خورد چوب و می نالید
گفتم ای سگ چرا زدت گستاخ :: بهتر از خود نمی تواند دید

Yesterday I saw the chaperon beating a dog with a stick, and the dog howling under the strokes.

I asked the dog, "Why did he beat thee?" He replied, "Because he cannot bear to see one better than himself!"

27. (مولا ناشهاب الدین)

On a physician.

ملك الموت از اصیل طیب :: می بنالید بیارگاهِ خدای
که جهانرا ز خلق خالی کرد :: اندرین دور کم شده سروبای
یا ازین شغل دور کن او را :: یا مرا خدمتِ دگر فرمای

The Angel of Death complained before the Divine Presence of the physician Asil, saying, "He has emptied the world of its people in these topsyturvy times. Either take *him* away from this occupation, or put *me* to some other work!"

28. (*Lines of* کاتبی *on the poet* بدر)

دی بدرک بدرگ را گفتم که تویی شاعر :: آن کز شعرا باشد انگیزشش باید
گستاخ که بهر شهری آویخته ام شعری :: شعر آن که چنان گوید آویختش باید

Yesterday I said to the ignoble little Badr, "Thou art not a poet. He who is of the class of poets deserves encouragement." He replied, "In every city I have hung up a poem." Well, he who writes such verse deserves to be hung!

[In pre-Mahomedan times, and later, the Arab poets used to hang up their verses on the gates of cities, to attract attention, this being the only mode of publication then known.]

29. (وحشی باقعی)

بر درِ خانه قَدَحِ نوشی :: کردم التماسِ شراب
شیشه لطف که اما بود :: چون حروفِ شرابِ نیمِ آب

I went to the house of a wine-drinker, and asked for wine. He favoured me with a bottle, but like the letters of the word شراب (wine) half of it was water (آب).

30. (*Lines of the poet پوربا on the failure of a campaign of the ruler of Isfizar against Ghiased-din Kurt.*)

شاها دگر بیشتی سستان سیستان : آهنگ جنگ لشکر ایرانیان مکت
ریش و بروت بیش نیند اهل سیستان : زنهار تکیه بر نمد و ریسمان مکت

O King, never again relying on the laggards of Seistân shouldst thou venture to wage war with the Iranians. The people of Seistân are naught but beards and mustaches! Beware! lean not thou upon felt and fibres!

31. *A Welcome to Germany.*

BY M. J. KH.

[Text and Tr. from "*The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia*" by Prof. E. G. Browne.]

مہمان تازہ وارد ایران خوش آمدی :
بالای چشم جای تو المان خوش آمدی :
ایران بخوان بماند و یگانگات بضیف :
ناخوانده مہمان سر این خوان خوش آمدی :
صبح وصال شکر خدا را نمود رخ :
آمد بسر لبالی ہجرات خوش آمدی :
از بہر صید مرغ دل عاشقات زار :
در دست دام و دانہ بدامان خوش آمدی :
با دعوی حمایت اسلام و مسلمین :
گشتی دخیلر حوزہ دزدان خوش آمدی :
لیکن چو بردہ اند حریفان ہر آنچه بود :
ترسم شود نصیب تو حرمان خوش آمدی :
اسلام بود یکس و بی دادرس کنوت :
صد شکر یافت چون تو نگہبان خوش آمدی :
من نیک می شناسمت ای رند پر فسون :
احسن خوان مکر تو شیطان خوش آمدی :
پیوستہ شاملست باسلام لطف تو :
ما عاجز از لوازم شکران خوش آمدی :
رندانہ با بہانہ دارالفتون و بانک :
غائل شدی بقصد پنهان خوش آمدی :

O newly arrived guest of Persia, welcome! O Germany, your place is in our eyes: welcome!

Persia is like a well-filled table with foreigners for guests; O guest unbidden to this table, welcome!

Thanks be to God! The morning of union hath appeared; the nights of separation have come to an end; welcome!

To take captive the bird-like hearts of your unhappy lovers, with the snare in your hand and the grain in your apron; welcome!

Claiming to be the protector of Islam and of Muslims thou hast entered the gang of thieves; welcome!

But since your competitors have carried off all that there was, I am afraid that disappointment may be your portion; welcome!

Islam was friendless and helpless; now a hundred thanks, it has found a guardian like thee; welcome!

I know thee well, O libertine of many spells; the Devil sings the praise of thy cunning; welcome!

Thy favour even embraces Islam; we are unable to voice the thanks which are your due; welcome!

Wantonly, with pretexts of College and Bank thou hast attained thy secret object; welcome!

32. (انوری)

هر بلائی که آسمان آید : گرچه بر دیگری قضا باشد
 زمین نا رسیده می گوید : خانه انوری کجا باشد

No sooner does any calamity coming from the sky reach the earth, than it asks—although it be destined for some one else—
 “Where is the house of Anwari?”

33. (انوری)

همدمی گفت صبر کن زیرا که : صبر کار تو خوب و زود کند
 آب رفته بجوی باز آرد : کار بهتر از آنچه بود کند
 گفتم آب از بجوی باز آید : ماهی مرده را چه سود کند

A friend said to me, “Exercise patience, for with patience you can do your work nicely and quickly. Patience brings the water again to the rivulet that has been dry, and makes a thing better than it was before.” I replied, “Even if the water returns to the stream, of what use is it to the fish that has already died?”

34. (بدرالدین جا جری)

گفتم سخت شکسته وش چون آید :: با آنکه همه چو درِ مکنون آید
گفتا سخن از دهانِ تنگی که مراست :: کر نشکنش چه گونه بیرون آید

I said to her, "Although your words are like pearls, why do you speak mincingly with broken words?" She replied, "You see the very small mouth that I have;—if I do not break the words, how can they come out?"

35.

شبی با صراحی همی گفت شمع :: که ای هرشی مجلس آرای دوست
ترا با چنین قدر پیشِ قدح :: سجودِ دمام بگو از چه روست
صراحی بدو گفت نشنیده :: تواضع ز گردن فرازان نکوست

One night the candle said to the wine-flask, "O thou, who every night adornest the assembly of the beloved, how is it that in spite of thy worth being so great, thou hast to bow before the cup so often?" The flask replied, "Hast thou not heard the verse (of Sa'adi)—'Humility comes well from those of high* estate?'"

36. (جامی)

بدرویش گفت آن توانگر چرا :: بیشم یس از دیرها آمدی
بگفتا «چرا نامدی» بیشِ ما :: بسی خوشتر است از «چرا آمدی»

The rich man asked the Durwesh, "How is it that I see you after a very long time?" He replied, "Because to me the words, 'Why did you not come?' sound far more sweet than the words, 'Why have you come?'"

37. (کلیم)

طاعتِ ما هم بسوی آسمانها می رود :: روزِ محشر چون بعضیان همتراز و میشود

Our prayers too will reach the heavens—on the day of judgment, when they are weighed in the balance against our sins.†

* Literally—"having exalted necks"—an allusion to the long neck of the flask.

† It is the lighter scale that goes up. The poet here delicately alludes to his not being a prayerful man.

38. (سلمان ساوجی)

از بس که شکستم و بیستم توبه : فریاد همی کنند ز دستم توبه
دی روز بتوبه شکستم ساغر : امروز بساغری شکستم توبه

Since I have many times made and broken the vows of repentance, Repentance complains of such treatment at my hands. Yesterday the vow of repentance was the cause of my breaking the wine cup; to-day it is the wine cup that is the cause of my breaking the vow of repentance.

39. (فنائی جغتائی)

ای که گفتی بر یزید و آل او لعنت مکن :
زانکه شاید حق تعالی کرده باشد رحمتش :
آنچه با آل نبی او کرده گر بخشد خدای :
هم بیخشاید ترا گر کرده باشی لعنتش :

O thou who wouldst dissuade one from cursing Yazeed and his descendants, on the plea that perhaps the Almighty might have forgiven him, know that if God can forgive what he did to the descendants of the Prophet, He will surely forgive thee if thou hast cursed Yazeed.

40. (شهاب ترشیزی)

بنده گر کمتر بخدمت میرسد : نیست در اخلاص نوعی از قصور
من چو نحلم شعر من چون انگبین : انگبین نزدیک بهتر نحل دور

If your humble servant waits upon you at long intervals, do not impute this to any lack of amity. I am like the bee, and my verses are like honey: better that the honey be near and the bee far off.

41. (کاشفی)

قلم بتلخی و شیرینی ای یسر رفتست : اگر تو ترش نشینی قضا چه غم دارد

My lad, the pen of Destiny has allotted thee thy joys and sorrows; if thou sittest glum and sour-faced, what doth Destiny care?

42.

Lines by the poet Sulmân Sûweji on a black horse presented to him by the King:

شاها مرا باسی موعود کرده بودی : در قولِ یادشاهان قلی دگر نباشد
اسی سیاه و بیرم دادند و من بر آنم : کاندَر جهان سیاهی زان پیر تر نباشد
آن اسپ باز دادم تا دیگری ستانم : در صورتی که کس رازین سرخبر نباشد
اسپِ سیه بدادم رنگِ دگر ندادند : آری پس از سیاهی رنگِ دگر نباشد

O King, thou hadst promised me a horse; about a king's word nothing further can be said.

They gave me an old black horse, than whom, in the world, no older black can be found.

I returned the horse, to exchange it for another in such a way that no one might get a hint of the transaction.

I gave back the black horse, but they gave me not one of another colour; verily, "Beyond black there is no colour"!

43. (سلمان ساوجی)

Further lines on the same horse.

شاهای امید بود که خواهم بدولت : بر مرکبی بلند و جوان و روان نشست
اسیم پیر و کاهل و کوتاه همنی دهند : اسبی نه آن چنان که توانم بر آن نشست
چون کلکِ مرکبی سیه و سست و لاغرست : چهلِ مرکب است بر اسبی چنان نشست
از بنده مهترست بسی سال و راستی : گستاخی است بر زبَرِ مهتران نشست

O King, I had hopes, with thy favour, to ride on a horse tall and young, and fleet.

But they gave me a horse that was stunted, and old, and slow—a horse not such that I could ride.

He is like the reed-pen, a mount that is black, and dull, and lean; and it would be ink-dark folly to ride such an animal. He is thirty years; my senior in age, and in sooth it would be impudence to sit above one's seniors!

44. (عمر خیّام)

از بادِ صبا دلم چو بویِ تو گرفت : بی‌ما را بگذاشت و جستجویِ تو گرفت
اکمنون ز منش هیچ نمی آید یاد : بویِ تو گرفته بود خویِ تو گرفت

When my heart got scent of thee from the morning breeze, it left me and went in search of thee. Now it has ceased to remember me: scent of thee it had, thy habit too it has acquired!

45. (عمر خیّام)

دستی چو منی که جام و ساغر گیرد : جف است که آن دفتر و منبر گیرد
تو زاهد خشکی و منم فاسد تر : آتش نشیده ام که در تر گیرد

For a hand like mine, that holds the cup and the goblet, it would be a pity to hold the Book and the Pulpit. Thou art a dry ascetic, and I a wet sinner: who ever heard of wet catching fire*?

46. (عمر خیّام)

با زلف تو گر دست درازی کردم : از روی حقیقت نه مجازی کردم
در زلف تو دیدم دل دیوانه خویش : من با دل خویش دست بازی کردم

If I ventured to handle thy locks of hair, the action had a deeper meaning than what appeared on the surface. In the locks I saw my infatuated heart, and it was with my own heart that my hands did play.

47. (منصور شیرازی)

در سینه دلم گم شده تهمت بکه بندم : غیر از تو کسی راه درین خانه ندارد

From my breast my heart has vanished: whom should I accuse of theft? Except thyself none has entry to this house.

48. (سعدی)

"The grapes are sour."

چو خوشتن نتواند که می خورد قاضی : ضرورتست که بر دیگران بگیرد سخت
که گفت پیره زن از میوه می کنند پرهیز : دروغ گفت که دستش نمی رسد بدروخت

When the Kazi is himself unable to partake of wine, it follows that he should be severe on those who drink. He who says an old woman abstains from fruit tells an untruth—the fact is, her hand cannot reach the tree.

In the following 14 pieces physical defects, etc., are turned to compliments.

49. (عمیق بخارائی)

آن سبزه که از عارض تو خاسته شد : تا ظن نبری که حسن تو کاسته شد
در باغ رخت بهر تماشای دلم : گل بود بسبزه نیز آراسته شد

Imagine not that the verdure that has appeared on thy cheek has in any degree impaired thy beauty. In the garden of thy face there was a rose to delight the eye of my heart but now it is adorned with foliage also.

* Hell-fire is referred to.

50. (امیر معزی)

On a sweetheart who had short ringlets.

آن زلفِ مشکبار بر آن روی چون بهار : گر کوتاه است کوتاهی از او عجب مدار
شب در بهار روی کند سوی کوتاهی : آن زلف چون شب آمد و آن روی چون بهار

If the musk-scented ringlets on her Spring-like face are too short, wonder not. Her face is like the season of Spring, and her ringlets like night; and every one knows that in Spring the nights have a tendency towards becoming shorter.

51.

On a one-eyed beauty.

زان بهم بسته آن صنم يك چشم : که تفنگِ نگه خطا نکند

The lady has one of her eyes closed for this reason, that the musket of her glances may not miss the mark.

52.

On a blind beauty.

بچشم آن بتِ زیبا حیا برتبه است : که هیچ چشم ندید است روی مردم را

That beautiful lady has so much modesty in her, that with neither eye has she yet dared to look into the face of any man.

[A second meaning of the line is: "The eye of no man hath seen the face of (*i.e.*, has gazed on) her pupils."]

53.

On a squinting person.

یاران حذر کنید ز احوال که آن نگاه : بر هر که همچو تیغ کج افتد دومی کنند

O friends, beware of a squinting person, for his glances, on whomsoever they fall, divide him into *two*,* as does a curved scimitar.

54.

On a girl who had a 'phulah'† in the eyes.

مردم آن نازنین از یغوله شد اندر حجاب :

در میانِ نرگسِ او این گل دیگر شکفت :

That pretty girl has the pupils of her eyes covered with 'phulah.' Another flower has blossomed in the midst of her narcissus.‡

* An allusion to the belief that a squinting person always sees a double image of every thing.

† A Hindustani word signifying a kind of ulcer of the eye-balls. The literal meaning of it is 'a flower.'

‡ *i.e.*, the eye, which is always compared to this flower.

55. (شمس الدین محمد خالد)

On an attack of gout from which Khwajeh Nizam-ul-Mulk was suffering.

گر درد کند پای فلک بیایت : سرّیست دران عرضه کنم برایت
چون از سر دشمنت بجان آید درد : آید بتظلم و فتد در پایت

If your heavens-traversing feet are suffering from pain, therein lies a mystery, the solution of which I lay before your intelligence. Pain is weary of being the constant companion of the heads of your enemies, and so it has come to lay its complaint at your feet.

56.

Lines of Nizami on a lady's losing a tooth.

آن دانه درّ ای صنم حور تَراد : کز درج تو بر بود زمانه بکه داد
مانا که یرد بیش دریا بنهاد : بنمود باو که درّ چنین باید زاد

O Houri-born damsel! To whom has the sky given the grain of pearl that it removed from your casket? Verily the sky has taken it to the ocean, with the object of showing to the latter that it should produce pearls like this one.

57. (سنجری خراسانی)

On a damsel whose face was pitted with smallpox.

گر بر رخ چون ماه تو ای جان جهان : از آبله چون ستاره گانست نشان
حسن پنهان نکردد ای ماه بدان : هرگز ز ستاره مه نگشتست پنهان

O soul of the world, if on thy moon-like face there are star-like marks of smallpox, they do not hide thy beauty, O my moon, for the moon can never be hidden by the stars!

58. (ابو سعید)

On a lady who had pain in the foot.

گر درد کند پای تو ای حور تَراد : از درد مدان که هرگزت درد مباد
آن درد من است بر منش رحم آمد : از بهر شفاعتم ییای تو فتاد

O thou Houri-born charmer, if thy foot is paining thee do not think it due to any disease, (from which mayest thou be ever free!) The pain is *my* pain, which feeling compassion for me, fell at thy feet to intercede for me.

59. (ابو سعید)

On a lady having pain in the ear.

جانم بلب از لبِ خوشِ تو رسید : وز لعلِ خوشِ باده نوشِ تو رسید
 گوشِ تو شنیده ام که دردی دارد : دردِ دلِ من مگر بگوشِ تو رسید

My soul has come to the lips (*i.e.* is ready to depart) owing to thy silent lips—those wine-drinking mute rubies of thine. I have heard that there is some pain in thine ear—it is rather the pain of my heart *that has reached thine ears*.

[The underlined words have a second meaning—"that thou hast heard of."']

60. (ابو سعید)

On a lady having inflammation of the eyes.

گر سرخ شد ست چشمِ آن حورِ نژاد : از دردِ مدان که هرگزش دردِ مباد
 در آئینه رویِ خویشتن دید مگر : عکسِ رخس از آئینه در چشمِ فتاد

If the eyes of that Houri-born damsel have become red, it is not due to any disease, (from which may she ever be free!) Rather, she viewed her rosy face in the mirror, and it is the reflection of the face from the mirror that has fallen on the eyes.

61.

On a stammering damsel.

ز لکنت نیست آن مه را سخن کز دیر می آید :
 جدائی از دهانِ او سخن را عار می آید :

If the words of that Beauty come slowly forth from her lips, attribute it not to stammering; the fact is, the words are reluctant to part from her sweet mouth!

62.

Sultan Takish Khan Khwarizm Shah once, in a fit of anger, knocked out a tooth of his favourite slave-girl. Later, becoming repentant, he made amends by sending her the following lines:—

گر شد کهری ز درجِ نوشینت کم : در حسنِ نگشته هیچ تمکینت کم
 صد ماه از اطرافِ رخت می تابد : گو باش ستاره ز پروینت کم

If from thy sweet casket a pearl has dropped out, thy rank in the galaxy of beauty is not lowered thereby. A hundred moons shine in the precincts of thy face—what if a star from thy Pleiades be less?

In the following 9 pieces the poets show a daring unconventionalism in religious matters.

63. (عمر خیّام)

من می خورم و مخالفان از چپ و راست
گویند بخور باده که دین را اعداست
چون دانستم که می عدوی دین است
والله بخورم خونِ عدو را که رواست

I drink wine, and my opponents on all sides exclaim, "Leave wine alone, for it is an enemy of our religion." Well, since I know now that wine is an enemy of our religion, by God I will drink the heart-blood of the enemy, for this would be a lawful act.

64. (عمر خیّام)

گوئی بهشت حورِ عین خواهد بود : و انجمنی ناب و انگین خواهد بود
کرما می و معشوق پرستیم رواست : چون عاقبت کار همین خواهد بود

You say that in Heaven there will be black-eyed houries, and pure wine, and honey. Since this is to be our final lot, we are doing but a lawful deed in worshipping wine and women in this world.

65. (عمر خیّام)

در مسجد اگر بهر نیاز آمده ام : بالله که نه از بهر نماز آمده ام
روزی زین جا سجاده دزدیدم : آن گم شده زانست که باز آمده ام

Into this mosque I have come from need, and not, by God, for the sake of prayer. One day I stole hence a prayer-carpet;—I have lost it and I have returned for another!

66. (عمر خیّام)

Address to God.

زاهد بکرم ترا چو ما نشناسد : بیگانه ترا چو آشنا نشناسد
گفتی که کنه کنی بدوزخ برمت : آنرا بکسی کو که ترا نشناسد

The devotee knoweth not of Thy Grace as we do. A stranger can know Thee not as a friend does. Thou hast said, "If you sin I will consign you to Hell." Go to! Tell this to him who knoweth Thee not!

67. (عمر خیّام)

Address to God.

من بندهٔ عاصیم رضای تو بگاست : تاریک دلم نورِ صفای تو بگاست
ما را تو بهشت اگر بطاعت بخشی : آن مزد بود لطف و عطای تو بگاست

A sinful slave am I—where is Thy Grace? Dark-hearted am I—where is the light of Thy Purity? If Thou allot us Heaven in recompense for our devotion, this is but *wages*—where are Thy Kindness and Bounty?

68. (فخرالدین رازی)

Address to God.

در رهگذرم هزار جا دام نهی : گوئی کُشت اگر در آن گام نهی
یک ذره زمین ز دامِ تو خالی نیست : گیری و کُشی و عاصیم نام نهی

In my path, in a thousand places, Thou layest the snares of temptation, and sayest, "I will kill thee if thou steppest thereinto." Not an inch of space on this Earth is without Thy lures; Thou seizest and slayest, and Thou callest me a sinner!

69. (ابنِ نصح)

Address to God.

با فاقه و فقر همنشینم کردی : بی مونس و بی یار و قرینم کردی
این مرتبهٔ مقربانِ درِ تست : آیا بیجه خدمت این چنینم کردی

Thou hast made me a companion of Indigence and Poverty; Thou hast made me bereft of helper, friend, or associate. Such dignity is for those who are nearest Thy throne. Prithee! in recompense for what service have I been chosen for this honour?

70. (عمر خیّام)

آبادِ خرابات ز می خوردنِ ماست : خونِ دو هزار توبه در کردنِ ماست
کر من نکنم گناه رحمت که کند : رحمت همه موقوفِ گناه کردنِ ماست

The thriving of the tavern is due to our drinking; the murder of two thousand vows of repentance lies to our charge. If I sin not, what scope is there for Divine mercy? The manifestation of His mercy depends on our sinning!

71. (عمر خیام)

من می خورم و هر که چو من اهل بود : می خوردن من بنزد او سهل بود
 می خوردن من حق بازل می دانست : گر می نخورم علم خدا جہل بود

I drink wine, and whoever like me is gentle and docile, holds my drinking as a trifling matter. In the Beginning, God knew of my drinking wine; if I drink not, then Divine prescience proves but nescience.

72.

(سوال)

بگو ای عاشق صادق چرا گلسته آوردی :
 دلر بلبل شکستی غنچه را دلخسته آوردی :

(جواب)

نه بهر زیبر دست ماه من گلسته آوردم :
 بخوبی لاف می زد گل بیشت بسته آوردم :

Q.—Tell me, O faithful lover, why have you brought to me the bouquet? Why have you broken the heart of the Bulbul, and why have you brought here the bud with wounded heart?

A.—It is not as a mere ornament for thy hand that I have brought thee this bouquet, O my sweetheart; the rose was boasting of its loveliness, so to thee I brought it bound hand and foot.

73.

(سوال)

ای راهبر خلق مرا راه نیا : وز حرف جوابت در مشکل بکشا
 گویند خدا بود و ذکر هیچ نبود : گر هیچ نبودست خدا بود جا

(جواب)

از مذهب و ملت خبری نیست ترا : می دان تو یقین که لا مکان است خدا
 کیفیت حق ز من چه می پرسی تو : جان در تن تست گو کجا دارد جا

Q.—O thou guide of mankind, show me a way out of this difficulty: they say God *was* ere anything came into existence; if nothing existed, then *where* was God?

A.—Thou seemest ignorant of the very principles of religion. Know for certain that God is ubiquitous. What need was there for asking me the question about Him? Thou hast a soul in thy body—tell me where it is situated.

74.

صاحببدلی گفت صاحببدلی : که این فکر افکند در مشکلی
که از ما نیاید بجز فعل زشت : ز بهر چه حق آفرید این بهشت
دگر يك جوابش چنین داد باز : که از فکر دیگر منم درگداز
که با این همه فضل و جودِ کریم : چه باشد غرض از وجودِ جیم

A worthy man said to another, "This point puzzles me much, that since nothing but what is evil originates from us, why did God create Heaven?" The other man replied, "I too am in a perplexity, but from an opposite point of view, viz., that since the Divine mercy and grace are so very great, what was His object in creating Hell?"

In the following three epigrams the first line, taken alone, sounds like praise, but the second line gives an opposite turn to the whole.

75. (مُختاری غزنوی)

همیشه خصم تو در سایهٔ ما باشد : ز بس که بر سرش از بهر استخوان آید

Thine enemies are ever under the shadow of the *Huma**—for the bird hovers over their heads to pick their bones.

76. (رشیدالدین و طواط)

بلند و یست جهان جله دشمنان تراست : که گاه درین چاه اند و گاه بر سرِ دار

The heights and depths of the world all belong to thine enemies—for sometimes they are at the bottom of a pit, and sometimes at the top of the gallows.

77.

جای خصمت چو جای تست رفیع : آن تو تخت و آن دشمن دار

The post of your enemy is as exalted as yours: yours is the throne and his the gallows.

* A fabulous bird whose shadow falling on any one was believed to bring him prosperity.

78. (عمید دلمی)

Parenthetical Asides.

خواجه بفرود و لیکن بورم : گشت مشغول و لیکن بشکم
 میزبان بود و لیکن برباط : نانم آورد و لیکن بدرم
 سر بر آورد و لیکن بفضول : دل تهی کرد و لیکن ز کرم
 بس حریص است و لیکن بحرام : بس جواد است و لیکن بجرم
 جاودات باد و لیکن بسقر : عمرها باد و لیکن بسقم

Our Khwajah has become big, (but with swelling!); he has been fully occupied, (but in pampering his belly!). He was a host, (but as an innkeeper!); he provided me bread, (but for money!). He has exalted his head, (but with folly!); he has cleansed his heart, (but by sweeping out charity!). He is very ambitious, (but of unlawful gains!); he is very prodigal (but with his vices!). May he live eternally (but in Hell!); may he remain for ages (but in infirmity!).

79. (وصال شیرازی)

On a Negro slave-girl.

دوش چون گشت جهان از سیاه زنگ سیاه
 از درم آن بت زنگی بدر آمد ناگاه
 با رخ غیرت مه لیک بهنگام خسوف
 خنده بر لب چو درختی که جهد ز ابر سیاه
 همچو نرگس که بنیمی شکفت در دل شب
 چشم افکنده بصد شرم همی کرد نگاه
 لب چو انگشت ولی نیبه انگشت آتش
 مو چو سلطان ولی چون شب سلطان کوتاه

Last night when the world was darkened by the army of Zanzibar, that dark-skinned beauty suddenly came out from my door;

With a face which would excite the envy of the moon—but at the time of the lunar eclipse, and with a smile on her lips like the lightning flashing from a dark cloud.

Like the narcissus half open at midnight, with eyes downcast she looked very bashfully.

Her lips were like charcoal, but half of the charcoal like glowing ember; her hair was like crabs, but short like the nights of the zodiacal sign of that name. [*i.e.*, in June-July when the Sun is in Cancer.]

In the following 8 pieces misers are the butts of the poets' shafts:—

80. (کال الدین اسمعیل)

بدھن نانِ خواجہ چون بردم : خواجہ گفتا کہ آہ من مردم
گفتش خواہ میر و خواہ ممیر : کہ من این لقمہ را فرو بردم

When I was going to carry to my mouth a piece of bread, belonging to the Khwájah, the miser said, "Oh, I shall die!" I replied, "If you like die, if you like do not die; but *here goes the morsel.*"

81. (لامعی)

ماہِ رمضان گرچہ شریفست و مبارک : سی روز بود نوبتِ وقتِ او ہر سال
در خانہ او سال سراسر رمضانت : تا حشر نیستند عیالانش شوال

Though the month of Ramazân is sacred and auspicious, its turn comes for only thirty days every year. In this man's house the year from end to end is Ramazân (the month of fasting), and till the day of Resurrection his family will not see the succeeding month, Shawwâl.

82. (لامعی)

خواجہ بزرگست و مال دارد و نعمت : نعمت و مالی کہ کس نیابد از آن کام
بخش جائی رسید کہو نگذارد : شوخ بگرما بہ بان و موی بحجام

The Khwajah is a great man, and is possessed of riches and the good things of life, but these blessings benefit no one. His sordidness has reached such a pitch, that he cannot bear to leave the dirt of his body with the keeper of the hot-bath, or his hair with the barber.

83. (عبدالعلی طوسی)

ای کاسہ تو سیاہ و دیگِ تو سفید : از آتش و آب ہر دو بیریدہ امید
آن شسہ نمی شود مگر در باران : وین گرم نمی شود مگر از خورشید

O thou, whose plate is black and cooking-pot white, the twain have lost all hopes of coming into contact with fire and water. The one never gets washed except by the rain, the other never gets warm except in the sun.

84. (حکیم سنائی)

دیگرِ خواجه ز گوشت دوشیزه است : مطبخ او ز دود پاکیزه است
خواجه چون نان خورد در آن موضع : مور را آرزوی نان ریزه است

Our Khwajah's cooking-pot is virgin in respect of meat, and his kitchen is ever free from smoke. Where he takes his meal, no crumb is left even sufficient for an ant.

85. (میرزا ابوقاسم شیرازی)

با فلان گفتم ای پسر پدرت : جز بتاریکی از چه نان نخورد
گفت ترسد ز روشنی که مباد : سایه اش دست سوی کاسه برد

I asked of a person—"Mylad, how is it your father takes not his meals except in darkness?" He replied, "He is afraid of the light, lest even his shadow may extend the hand towards the platter."

86. (امیری)

ترا ای خواجه کز امساك بر خوان : ز نعمتای الوان هیچ اثر نیست
چو مه بر نطع گردون سفره ات را : شب از يك كرده نان بیشتر نیست
ولی هر کوشکت آن كرده نان : اگرچه دانم آن حد بشر نیست
کنند گر دعوی اعجاز شاید : که این معجز کم از شق القمر نیست

O Khwajah, owing to thy niggardliness thy dinner-table bears no trace of the variety of victuals. Like the moon on the table-cloth of the sky, there is on thy table at nights only a particle of bread, and nothing more. If any one succeed in partaking of that bread with thee—although I know such a feat is beyond human power—he would be justified in claiming to be endowed with miracle-working power, for this miracle is not short of that of dividing the moon.*

[* A miracle attributed to Muhammad.]

87. (صبائی کاشانی)

دی بر سرِ خوانِ خواجه رقم : ای معشرِ دوستان بشارت
جستم ز هوای گرم جانی : تا جان شود این از حرارت
او بهر نازِ خویشتن خواست : فرشی که در آن بود طهارت
خادم خندان بگوشه چشم : بر مطبخ و سفره کرد اشارت

Yesterday I went to the Khwajah as a guest—ye boon-companions congratulate me!

I sought shelter from the warm weather, a place where I could be protected from the heat.

He himself wanted for the performance of his prayers a carpet quite clean.

The servant smilingly pointed with his eyes towards the kitchen and the table-cloth.

[The kitchen was meant to be a *cool* place, as there never had been a fire lighted there for cooking purposes; and the table-cloth could serve as the prayer carpet as it had never been soiled by any dish placed thereon.]

88. (سعدی)

گر سقیی زبات دراز کند : که فلانی بفسق ممتاز است
فسق ما بی بیان یقین نشود : و او باقرار خویش غماز است

If a fool cast a slur upon me, accusing me of being a reprobate, men will not take upon trust, without proof, what he says of my depravity; but in the meantime, on his own confession he is a scandal-monger.

89. (سعدی)

مردکی غرقه بود در جیحون : از سرقت بود پشدارم
بانگ می کرد و زار می نالید : کای درینا کلاه و دستارم

A fellow who, I believe, was from Samarkand, was drowning in the Oxus. He was crying out and lamenting sore—"Alas for my cap and turban!"

90. (اوحدی مراغه)

Married bliss!

پسری با پسر بزاری گفت : که مرا یار شو به همسر و جفت
گفت بابا دگر بکن زن نه : پند گیر از خلیق از من نه
زن بگیری ترا رها نکنند : و تو نکندارش چها نکنند
از من و مادرت نگیری پند : چند دیدیم و نیز دیدی چند
آن رها کن که آب و هیمه نماند : ریش بابا بین که نیمه نماند

A son entreated his father to help him in getting married. The father said, "My son, do something else, but do not take a wife. Pay heed to the counsels of the people of the world, if not to mine. If you take a wife, you cannot get away from her; and if you do not get quit of her, what will she not do? Can you not learn wisdom from the life we twain, myself and your mother, are leading? How much have we gone through, as you yourself have seen? Give up this notion, for naught is left of provisions and fuel. See, *of the beard of your father not even half is left!*"

91.

تازه بود بوستان تا که بود آب تر : دوستی دوستان تا که بود سیم و زر

The garden is fresh-looking as long as it has a sufficient supply of water; and the friendship of friends lasts as long as there is gold and silver.

92. (عرفی)

Job's Comforters.

تن افتاد درین حال و دوستان نصیح : بدو بالش و بستر ستاده چون منبر
یکی بریش کشد دست و کج کند کردن : که روزگار وفا با که کرد جان بدر
یکی برمی آواز و گفتگوی حزین : کند شروع و کشد آستین بدیده تر
که جان من همه را این رهست و باید رفت : تمام راه روانیم و دهر را کب بر
یکی یحرب زبانی سخن طراز شود : که نظم و شری تو من جمع می کنم یکسر
خدای عز و جل صحبتیم دهد بینی : که این منافقان را چه آوردم بر سر

My body has fallen into this condition, and the glib friends take their stand, like the pulpit, round my pillow and bed.

One strokes his beard, and crooks his neck, saying: "O father's darling! To whom has this world shown fidelity?"

Another begins with soft voice and melancholy tone, and drawing his sleeve across his tearful eyes, says: "My dear friend, this is the way for all, and they have to go; we are all travellers mounted on Time."

Another indulges in glib chatter, saying: "All thy Prose and Verse I undertake to compile."

May God, the Glorious and Sublime, give me health! You will then see what I will bring down on the heads of these hypocrites!

93. (عمر خیّام)

گویند که مرد را هنر می باید : یا نسبتِ عالیِ پدر می باید
امروز چنان شده است در نوبتِ ما : کین ها همه هیچ هست زر می باید

It has been said that a man, in order to be respectable, should be master of some craft, or should be of gentle birth. Now, in our own times, these qualifications go for nothing; the principal qualification is the possession of gold.

94.

Money makes the man.

امروز خلق خویشی با سیم و زر کنند : بی زر برادر است از او هم حذر کنند
زر دار را بمجلس بس تنگ جا دهند : جای فراخ بی زر را تنگ تر کنند
بی زر سلام گوید از جا کسی نمجنبد : زر دار را تواضع از پای سر کنند
زر دار اگرچه نادان گویند عاقل است : بی زر اگرچه دانا نسبت بخر کنند

In these days men claim kinship with gold and silver only; they steer clear of a poor man, even though he be a brother. At a meeting, they make room for a rich man, however crowded the hall be already; but a poor man is elbowed out, even if there be plenty of room. When a poor man salutes, no one even nods in reply; but in bowing to a rich man they bend from head to foot. A rich man, be he an idiot, is held to be a very wise man; but a poor man, however wise, is but an ass in their estimation.

95. (سعدی)

The Detractors.

بکوشش توان دجله را پیش بست : شاید زبان بد اندیش بست
اگر کنج خلوت گزیند کسی : که پروای صحبت ندارد بسی
مذمت کنندش که زرقست و ریو : ز مردم چنان می گریزد که دیو
و گر خنده رویست و آمیزگار : عقیقتش ندانند و پرهیزگار
غنی را بنیست بکاوند پوست : که فرعون اگر هست در عالم اوست
اگر مرد درویش در سختی است : بگویند از ادبار و بد بختی است
و گر کامرانی در آید ز پای : غنیمت شمارند و فضلِ خدای

که تا چند ازین جاه و گردنکشی : خوشی را بود در قفا ناخوشی
و گر تنگ دستی تنگ مایه : سعادت بلندش کند پایه
بخایندهش از کینه دندان بزه : که دون پرورست این فرومایه دهی
چو بیند کاری بدست در است : حریصت شمارند و دنیا پرست
و گر دست همت بداری ز کار : گدا بیشه خوانند و یخته خوار
اگر ناطقی طبل بر یاوه : و گر خامشی نقش گرماوه
تحمّل کنانرا نخوانند مرد : که بیچاره از بیم سر بر نکرد
و گر در سرش هول و مردانگیست : گریزند از او کین چه دیوانگیست
تعت کنندش گراندک خوراست : که مالش مگر روزی دیگر است
و گر تیز و پاکیزه باشد خورش : شکم بنده خوانند و تن پرورش
اگر بی تکلف زید مالدار : که زینت بر اهل تیز است عار
زبان در نهندش بایدا چو تیغ : که بد بخت زردارد از خود دریغ
و گر کاخ و ایوان منقش کند : تن خویش را کسوتی خوش کند
بجان آید از طعنه بروی زنان : که خود را یاراست همچون زنان
و گر یارسانی سیاحت نکرد : سفر کردگانش نخوانند مرد
که نارفته بیرون ز آغوش زن : کداهش هنر باشد و رای و فن
جهان دیده راهم بدرزند پوست : که سر گشته بخت برگشته اوست
گرش خطّ از اقبال بودی و بهر : زمانه نراندی ز شهرش بشهر

With effort you can check the flow of the Tigris, but you can never shut the mouth of the slanderers.

If a man, not caring for the society of others, chooses a secluded life, they revile him, saying it is all hypocrisy and deceit, and that he flees from mankind as does a demon. On the other hand, if a man be of a jolly and social disposition, they can never believe that he can be chaste and abstemious. The rich man cannot escape their slander, for in their eyes he is no other than a second Pharaoh in this world. If a poor man is in distress, they attribute it to his perverseness and his ill luck; but when a well-to-do man goes down in the world, of course, they see the hand of God in his chastisement, for, say they, "How long was this exalted position to last? Is not joy always followed by bitterness?" When they see a man,

once in straitened circumstances, rise to affluence and power, they gnash their teeth in envy, saying that this faithless world cherishes only worthless men.

If you have your hands full of work, why then, you are but 'a worshipper of Mammon'; but give up your work, and then you are 'a professional beggar' and 'a miserable mendicant'!

If you *speaks*, you are sure to be compared to a noisy drum; but if you are *silent*, you are like a picture painted on the walls of a bathroom. Men of forbearing disposition are not, in their estimation, brave men, and their forbearance is attributed to fear; but let these traducers encounter a valiant and headstrong man, and they flee from him, crying out that he is a mad man.

If a man is abstemious in his diet, he is accused of hoarding up wealth for the use of others; but on the other hand the man who partakes of choice and delicious viands is upbraided for being a glutton and a slave to his stomach.

The rich man, who lives without ostentation, and dresses simply, as befits a sensible man, cannot escape the swords of their tongues, for he is called 'a wretch who grudges the spending of money on his own comforts.' But were he to decorate his mansion and put on an elegant dress, he would still be driven to distraction with their sneering insinuations as to his having feminine tastes.

If a religious man is not a traveller, those who have travelled hesitate to call him a man, for, say they, "How can one, who has never gone further than an arm's length from the side of his wife, be at all possessed of any wisdom, art, or craft?" On the other hand, the traveller too comes in for a share of their gibes, as being a distracted man to whom the fates are adverse; for, "had he possessed but an iota of good fortune," say they, "he would not have been driven from city to city."

96. (معدی)

The Ways of the World.

گر در همه شهر يك سر نيشتر است : در پای کسی رود که درویش تراست
با این همه راستی که میزان دارد : میل از طرفی کند که آن بیشتر است

If there is but one lancet in the whole of the town, it is sure to prick the foot of the poorest man. Although the weighing-balance is said to be so very just, it always leans to the side that has plenty.

97.

هر کس که بکیسه زر مهیا دارد : چون نور بچشم همه کس جا دارد
زرگر بیری دوش چه نیکو می گفت : اشراف کسی که اشرافها دارد

Whosoever has a purse full of gold, is to all men like the light of their eyes. As the goldsmith's son nicely expressed it last evening, "A real gentleman is he who has plenty of Ashrafees."

[اشراف is a Hindustani word used here.]

98.

در نوکری هند لباس است باید : دستار زر و جامه تاست باید
چون گاو شکم ریش درازت باید : نه عقل و خرد فهم و فراست باید

To enter the service of the Emperor of India, what you require is a good dress, a turban of gold cloth, and a garment of silk. You should have a belly like that of an ox, and a long beard. As for intellect and wisdom, sense and judgment, they are all useless here!

99. (سعدی)

بجگم قضا چون کسی افتاد : همه عالمش پای بر سر نهستند
چو بینند کافال دستش گرفت : ستایش کنان دست بر بر نهستند

If destiny brings about the fall of a person, the whole world will trample on his head. When they see that Fortune has taken hold of his hand, they singing his praise, will place their hands on the breast!

100. (سعدی)

در میر و وزیر و سلطان را : بی وسیت مگرد پیرامن
سگ و دربان چو یافتند غریب : این گریان گرفت و آن دامن

Go not to the door of the nobleman, or the Wazir, or the Sultan, unless you have influence to back you. The dog and the door-keeper, both, when they see a stranger, rush on him, one seizing him by the collar, and the other by the skirt.

101. (سعدی)

The Unruly Stomach.

کوش تواند که همه عمر وی : نشنود آواز دف و چنگ و نی
دیده شکبید ز تهاشای باغ : بی گل و نسرین بسر آرد دماغ

گر نبود بالش آکنده پر : خواب توان کرد حجر زیر سر
 و ر نبود دلبر همخواه پیش : دست توان کرد در آغوش خویش
 و ر نبود مرکب زین لگام : پای تواند که رود چند گام
 این شکم بی هنر بیج بیج : صبر ندارد که بسازد بهیج

It is possible for the Ear not to hear throughout life the sound of the tambourine, the harp, and the flute.

The Eye can do without the sight of a garden. The Nose can bear to be without the scent of the Rose and the *Nasrin*.

In the absence of a pillow stuffed with feathers, one can sleep with a stone under the head.

If the charming spouse be not nigh, the hands can be taken in one's arms.

And if there be not at hand a horse with a golden bridle, the foot can manage to walk some distance.

But this unskilled tortuous Belly has not the patience to put up with anything!

102. (سعدی)

The Bookish Pedant.

علم چندانست که بیشتر خوانی : چون عمل در تو نیست نادانی
 نه محقق بود نه دانشمند : چار یائی بر او کتابی چند
 آن تهی منز را چه علم و خبر .. که بر او هیزم است یا دفتر

The more you lay up a store of learning the more ignorant are you, if you cannot turn it to account.

A beast laden with a few books is neither a philosopher nor a sage.

What knowledge has that beast void of brain? And what knows he whether on him is firewood or a parcel of books?

103. (رشیدالدین وطواط)

The World.

فریاد ازین جهان که خردمند را در او : بهره بجز نوائب و حرمان نمی رسد
 جهال در تنعم و ارباب فضل را : بی صد هزار غصه یکی نان نمی رسد
 جاهل بمجلس اندر و عالم برون در : جوید بجهله راه و بدربان نمی رسد

Our grievance against the World is, that wise men therein receive for their portion nothing but adversity and disappointment.

The fools live in clover, while men of merit cannot obtain even a loaf of bread without a hundred thousand worries.

The fool has a seat in the assembly, while the sage outside the door, with all his artifices to get admittance, cannot even approach the door-keeper.

104. (ابن یمن)

The Ways of the World.

ای دوستان بکامِ دلم نیست روزگار : آری زمانه دشمنِ اهلِ هنر بود
 سهلت اگر جفا کشم از دورِ یوفا : زحمت نصیبِ مردمِ والا کهر بود
 بر آسمان ستاره بود یشمار لبک : رنجِ کسوف بر دلِ شمس و قر بود
 رسمیت در زمانه که هر کم بضاعتی : ز اهلِ هنر برتبه ها بیشتر بود
 دریا صفت که منصبِ خاشاک اندر او : بالای عقدِ کوهر و سلكِ دُرر بود

[Translation by Prof. E. G. Browne:]

Not as I would, O Friends, the world doth go :
 Of men of genius it is the constant foe.
 Though fickle Fortune trouble me, what then ?
 Trouble's the portion of all noble men.
 The sky holds countless stars, of which not one
 Suffers eclipse, except the Moon and Sun.
 'Tis the custom now that he who wants for wits,
 Ever above the man of talent sits,
 As on the sea the dust and rubbish swim,
 While pearls lie sunk in its abysses dim.

105. (معین الملك اصم)

سک درین روزگار بی فرجام : بر چنین مهتری شرف دارد
 در قلم داشتند فلاح نایند : خنک آنرا که چنگ و دف دارد

In these perverse times even a dog is more honoured than a man howsoever worthy.

Being master of the pen brings no good fortune ; happy is he who is master of the harp and the tambourine.

106. (وقار شیرازی)

The Poet's Luck.

دردا که از ستیزه چرخ ستیزه کار : هر کار را که خواستم آسان شود نشد
 مایوس از آسان چو شدم گفتم این گره : باز از عنایتِ شه ایران شود نشد
 گفتم شه ار بحال گدایان نظر نکرد : رحمی بمن ز صاحب دیوان شود نشد
 از این وظیفه که ز دیوان معین است : پسنداشتم عمارت ویران شود نشد
 بگذشتم از اساس و گذر کردم از لباس : گفتم که این بهای دو من نان شود نشد
 گفتم که نان بمن رسد از کار گاو غیب : این وجه صرفِ قهوه و غلیان شود نشد
 گفتم روم بَری ولی این وجه مرده ریگ : چندان که بنده عازم طهران شود نشد

Alas! Owing to the spite of the malignant heavens, whenever I wished that an affair should turn out all right, it so befell not.

Disappointed in the heavens, I said, "This knot will be untied by the favour of the King of Persia," but so it befell not.

I said "If the King has not thought fit to attend to the condition of beggars, at least the Minister would have pity on me"; but so it befell not.

From the allowance assigned to me by the State I thought I would be able to put my house in repairs; but so it befell not.

I gave up all notions of building, and even of expenditure on dress, saying this salary would suffice for purchasing two pounds of bread; but so it befell not.

I said "Bread I can get through Divine Providence, let this salary suffice for expenses of coffee and the smoking pipe"; but so it befell not.

I said I would go to Rai, but this sorry stipend allowed not even of my setting out for Tehran; so it befell not.

107. (کاتبی)

فریاد ز دستِ خامه قیر اندود : کو رازِ دلم بدشن و دوست نمود
 گفتم که زبانش بیژم کنگ شود : بیریدم از آن فصیح ترکشت که بود

I have a grievance against the black-faced pen, that it has betrayed my secrets to friend and foe.

I said I would cut off its tongue so that it might become dumb. I did so, and lo! it was more eloquent than before!

[Reference is to the mending of the reed-pen, in which the nib is cut with the knife.]

108. (عید زاکانی)

در خانه من ز نیک و بد چیزی نیست : جز بنگی و پاره نمده چیزی نیست
از هرچه یزند نیست غیر از سودا : و هرچه خورند جز لکده چیزی نیست

In my house, of things good or bad there is naught; except the narcotic hemp and a piece of rug there is naught. Of things that are *cooked*, except schemes, there is naught; and of things that are *eaten*, except kicks, there is naught.

[In Persian, to 'cook' a scheme is to mature it, and to 'eat' a kick is to receive it.]

109. (مولوی رومی)

Satan's Baits for Men.

گفت ابلیس لعین دادار را : دام زفتی خواهم این اشکار را
زر و سیم و گله اسپش نمود : که بدین تانی خلاق را ربود
گفت شاباش و فرو آویخت لنج : شد ترنجیده و ترش همچون ترنج
پس زر و گوهر زمعدنهای خوش : کرد آن پس مانده را حق پیشکش
گیر این دام دگر را ای لعین : گفت زین افزون ده ای نعم المعین
چرب و شیرین و شراباتِ ثمین : دادش و بس جامه ابریشمین
گفت یارب یش ازین خواهم مدد : تا بیندم شان بجبل من مسد
تا که مستانت که زر و پردلند : مردوار آن بندها را نگسلند
دام دیگر خواهم ای سلطانِ بخت : دام مرد اندازِ جلیت جوی سخت
خمر و چنگ آورد یش او نهاد : نیم خنده زد بدو شد نیم شاد
چون که خوبی زنان با او نمود : که ز عقل و صبر مردان می ربود
پس زد انگشتک برقص اندر فتاد : که بده زوتر رسیدم در مراد

Thus spake cursed Iblis to the Creator: "I want a mighty trap to catch (human) game."

God gave him gold and silver, and troops of horses, saying, "You can trap the people with these."

Iblis said "Bravo!" but at the same time hung his lip, and, like the citron, became sour and wrinkled.

Then God offered gold and jewels from precious mines to that laggard (in Faith), saying, "Take these other traps, O Cursed One!" But Iblis said "Give me something more, O Bountiful One!"

God gave him dainties, and sweets, rich wines, together with many silken garments.

Iblis said "Lord! I want more aids than these; I want to bind men with my strong rope, so that Thy adorers, who are strong and valiant, may not manfully burst through my bonds.

I want another trap, O Ordainer of Destiny! a trap to overcome brave men—a trap very craftily laid."

God brought forth Drink and Music, and laid them before him; but Iblis smiled a half-smile, and was only half glad.

When God showed him the beauty of women, which bereaves men of reason and self-control, then Satan clapped his hand and began dancing, saying, "Give me these quickly. I have now attained my object."

HUMOROUS STORIES IN VERSE.

1. (قاسمی خوانی)

A foolish Marwazi and his Ass.*

ابلهٔ مروزی بشهرِ مری : سوی بازار برد لاشه خری
لاغر و ست و پیر و فرسوده : سم و دندان و استخوان سوده
جست دلال چست بر پشتش : کرد جنابن بسیخه و مشتش
گفت کای تاجران و راهروان : که خرد مرکبی روان و جوان
مروزی گفت ای بجات یارم : گر چنین است پس نگه دارم

A foolish Marwazi went to the city of Herat, and took with him to the market-place his wretched ass for sale. The animal was lean, weak, and old, and was altogether in a sorry plight—with teeth lacking, hoofs worn out, and bones battered. A broker actively vaulted over the back of the animal, and with a liberal use of the fist and the goad, made him trot. Then turning to the people, said he: "O ye merchants and wayfarers, which of you is going to purchase this steed that is active and young?" "Stop, my dear friend," interposed the Marwazi, "if such are his qualifications, I do not want to sell the animal."

2. (سنائی)

The squint-eyed boy.

پسری احوال از پدر پرسید : کای تو درهای بسته را چو کلید
گفتی احوال یکی دو بیند چون : من نیستم ازان چه هست فروغ
احوال از هیچ کز شما رستی : مه که بر چرخ دوست چارستی

A squint-eyed boy once said to his father: "O you, who are the key of all locked doors, you have said that a man with a squint sees two images in place of one. Now, how can this be, since I do not see more images than there actually are? If what you say be true, I ought to see four moons in the sky *instead of the two that are there.*"

3. (سنائی)

An old woman's love for her daughter!

داشت زال بروستای نکار : مهستی نام دختری و سه گاو
نو عروسی چو سرو بن بالات : گشت روزی ز چشم بد نالان
زال گفتی همیشه با دختر : باد پیش تو مردن مادر

* i. e. an inhabitant of Marw.

از قضا گاو زالك از بى خورد : سر خود را بدیگی اندر کرد
ماند چون پای مرده اندر دیگ : آن سر مرده رنگش اندر دیگ
گاو مانند دیوی از دوزخ : سوی زالك دویده از مطبخ
زال پنداشت هست عزرائیل : بانگ برداشت از بى تحویل
ملك الموت من نه مهستیم : من یکی بىر زالر محنتیم
گر ترا مهستی همی باید : اینك او را بىر مرا شاید

In the village of Takâw an old woman had a daughter named Mohsati, and three cows. One day the girl, who was growing beautiful and tall as a cypress tree, became ill, being smitten with the evil eye; and the old woman frequently said to her, "May your mother's death precede yours!"

It chanced that a cow, belonging to the old woman, put her head into a large cooking pot, while searching for some food; and the head got jammed in the pot, like the legs of a man in quicksand.

From the kitchen the cow, looking all the while like a devil from Hell, ran towards the old woman, who, thinking the animal to be Azrael, the angel of Death, cried out deprecatingly, "O angel of Death! I am not Mohsati; I am but a poor old woman full of troubles. If it is Mohsati whom you want, she is here, take her, I consent."

4. (خواجہ مجد الدین خوافی)

Children's Prayers.

به عهد ما تقدّم در نشاپور : مگر قحطی قتاد از عهد ما دور
بروت آمد یکی مردِ معلّم : گروهی کودکات با وی ملازم
ظریفی گفت اینها در چه کارند : چرا گویند چون عقلی ندارند
معلّم گفت چون وقت عذاب است : دعای این جماعت مستجاب است
ظریفش گفت ای قولر تو مقبول : بگویم با تو قولی نیک معقول
اگر ایزد دعای شان شنودی : معلّم در جهان کی زنده بودی

Some years ago, remote from our times, there was a famine in Nishapoor. A schoolmaster was seen going to a place of worship, followed by his pupils. A witty man asked, "Of what use will they

be? Not being endowed with wisdom, what will they say?" The schoolmaster replied: "In times of such a public calamity their prayers would be useful, being acceptable to the Lord."

"Were this the case," said the wit, "there would not be a single schoolmaster left alive in this world."

5. (لوائی)

How a hungry Bedouin Arab got his dinner.

عربی در میان مکه و شام : کسب اسباب می نمود مدام
 بهر تحصیل مال و کسب هنر : از حضر رخت بست سوی سفر
 مدتی سیر کرد و هیچ نیافت : باز سوی مکان خوش شتافت
 چند که راه بادیه بیرید : تا یک روزه از وطن برسد
 از کمر باز کرد انبانی : که در او بود بخنی و نانی
 چون بخوردن نشست آن سره مرد : عربی در رسید بادیه کرد
 بدوی چون شنید بوی طعام : پیش رفت و ستاده کرد سلام
 داد او را جواب و گفت که : پیش من ایستاده بهر چه
 گفت من چاکرِ سرای تو ام : دشت ییهای از برای تو ام
 گفت از خیل من خبر داری : بدوی در جواب گفت آری
 گفت چون است احمد آن پسر : که ز هجرش کباب شد جگرم
 گفت از فضل و رحمت یزدان : باغ حسن است خرم و خندان
 گفت چون است مادر احمد : گفت سد چوت برابر احمد
 گفت چوت است قصر و ایوانم : کز غش بر فلک شد افانم
 گفت آن قصی دلکش و ایوان : داغ رشکی ست بر دل کیوان
 گفت آن بارکش شتر چون است : کز غش دامنم چون چوچون است
 گفت باوی که فربه است چنان : که مساوی ست پشت با کوهان
 گفت چون است آن سگ در من : که بود به ز شیر تر بر من
 گفت او خاک آستانه ست : روز و شب یاسبان خانه تست
 چون عرب قصه را شنید تمام : با دل جمع کرد میل طعام

خورد چند ان که سیر گشت ازان : بدوي را نداد و بست انبان
 بدوی چون خساست او دید : بر خود از دردِ جوع می پیچید
 ناگهان دید کز کنار دشت : آهوئی در رسید و تند گذشت
 بدوي چوت بدید آهو را : از دل خسته جست آه او را
 چوت عرب آه دردناک شنود : گفت باوی که آه بهر چه بود
 گفت ازين بود کان سک در تو : گر نمی گشت صدقه سر تو
 آهوک را نمی گذاشت کنون : که ازين دشت جان برد بیرون
 گفت ای وای آن سک چون مرد : گفت از بس که خون اشتر خورد
 گفت خون شتر که ریخت بگو : خاک بر فرق من که ریخت بگو
 گفت کشتند اشتر سره ات : که دهند آب و آتش همسر ات
 گفت ای وای زوجه ام چون مرد : رخت هستی چسان بخاک سپرد
 گفت از بس که کوفت سر به زمین : از غم فوت احمد مسکین
 گفت ای وای چون گذشت احمد : گفت قصرش به سر فرود آمد
 چون عرب قصه فراق شنید : خاک بر سر فشاند و جامه درید
 بعد ازان راه خیل خویش گرفت : بدوي نان و گوشت پیش گرفت

An Arab who frequently traded between Mecca and Syria, once undertook a journey with the object of increasing his gains and extending his commercial knowledge. For a while he travelled from place to place, but in the end he had to return homewards, without having made any profit. After traversing the desert for some days, he reached a place that was within one day's journey from home. From his girdle he then untied his wallet which contained bread and dried flesh; and the good man was just preparing to eat, when there appeared one of the roving Bedouin Arabs. The latter, at the sight of food, came before the former, made his obeisance, and remained standing. The Arab returned the salute, and asked him who he was, and why he stood there.

"I am a servant of thy house," said the Bedouin, "and have crossed the desert for thy sake."

"Have you any news from my family?" asked the Arab.

"Yes," replied the Bedouin.

"Well, how is Ahmad, my son, separation from whom has made my liver like roast meat?"

"Through the grace and mercy of God, the garden of his beauty is flourishing."

"And how is the mother of Ahmad?"

"Even better than Ahmad."

"And in what condition is my mansion, absence from which raises my outcry to heaven?"

"The mansion, with its elegance, has planted envy in the breast of Saturn."

"And how is my load-bearing camel, separation from whom makes me shed copious tears?"

"Oh, he is so fat that his back seems on a level with the hump."

"And how is my watch-dog, who was in my eyes even better than a male lion?"

"He keeps watch, day and night, over thy threshold."

When the Arab learnt all this news he, with his mind at ease, took to his meal. He ate till he was satisfied, but made no offer of the food to the Bedouin; and began to put away the remains into his wallet. The Bedouin who was suffering from hunger was disgusted with this meanness.

At this juncture an antelope appeared in sight, on the verge of the desert, and again rapidly disappeared from view. The Bedouin, on seeing the animal, gave vent to a deep sigh. The Arab hereupon asked him the cause of it.

"Had your dog been alive," said the Bedouin, "he would not have allowed the antelope to escape with his life."

"Alas! how did the dog die?" inquired the Arab.

"He died of eating too much of your camel's flesh."

"And who killed my camel? Who is it that has thrown dust on my head?"

"The good camel was killed on the occasion of thy wife's funeral feast."

"Alas! How did my wife die?"

"Sorrow for the death of poor Ahmad made her dash her head against a stone."

"Woe is me! What was the cause of Ahmad's death?"

"Thy mansion came down on his head."

When the Arab heard this woeful news he threw dust over his head, and tore his garments, and immediately set forth on his journey homewards, leaving his wallet where it was. This the Bedouin now picked up, and made a hearty meal of the bread and meat.

STORIES FROM THE MASNAVI OF ROUMI.

6. *The sick man and his deaf visitor.*

آن کرى را گفت افزون مایهٔ : که ترا رنجور شد همسایه
گفت با خود کر که باکوشِ گران : من چه دریابم ز گفتِ آن جوان
خواجه رنجور و ضعیف آواز شد : لیک باید رفت آنجا نیست بد
چون بینم کان لبش جنبان شود : من قیاسی گیرم آنرا از خرد
چون بگویم چونی ای محنت کشم : او بخواهد گفت نیکم یا خوشم
من بگویم شکر چه خوردی ابا : او بگوید شربتِی یا ماش با
من بگویم صبح و نوشت باد آن : از طیبیان پیش تو گوید فلان
من بگویم بس مبارک یاست او : چون که او آید شود کارت نکو
بای او را آزمودستیم ما : هر کجا شد می شود حاجت روا
این جواباتِ قیاسی راست کرد : عکسِ آن واقع شد ای آزاده مرد
کر در آمد پیش رنجور و نشست : بر سر او خوش همی مالید دست
گفت چونی گفت 'مردم' گفت شکر : شد ازان رنجور پر آزار و 'نکر
کاین چه شکر است این عدوی ما' بدست : کر قیاسی کرد آن کج آمدست
بعد ازان گفتش چه خوردی گفت زهر : گفت نوشت باد افزون گشت قهر
بعد ازان گفت از طیبیان کیست او : که همی آید یچاره پیش تو
گفت عزرائیل می آید برو : گفت یایش بس مبارک شاد شو
این زمان از نزد او آیم برت : گفتم او را تا که گردد غمخورت
کر برون آمد بگفت او شادمان : شکر که کردم مراعات این زمان
گفت رنجور این عدوی جانِ ماست : ما ندانستیم کو کانِ جفاست

A deaf man was told by a better endowed man—"A neighbour of thine is ill." Said the deaf man to himself, "Owing to my deafness how shall I be able to make out what the young man will say?"

The gentleman must have become weak voiced from illness. But go there I must: no harm therein. When I see his lips moving, I shall, by use of reason, guess what he is saying. When I say to him, 'How art thou, O my afflicted friend?' he will probably reply, 'I am well' or 'I am hearty.' I shall then say, 'Thanks be to God! Tell me what have you taken for food?' He will probably mention some liquid food or gruel. I'll then wish that the food may agree with him, and shall ask him the name of the physician under whose treatment he is. On his naming the man I shall say, 'He is a skilful leech. Since it is he who is in attendance, you will soon be well. I have had experience of him. Wherever he goes, his patients very soon recover.'"

Thus the deaf man prepared himself for the visit; but see how it all turned out contrariwise.

The deaf man came to the bedside of the sick man and sat down near the pillow, rubbing his hand gently on the latter's head. He asked, "How are you?" "I am dying," replied the patient. "Thanks be to God!" rejoined the deaf man. At this the sick man was shocked and offended, and said to himself, "What kind of thank-giving is this? He must be an enemy of mine". The deaf man thought that something had gone amiss.

"What have you eaten?" was the next question; to which the reply was "Poison!" "May it agree with you!" was the wish expressed by the deaf man, which but increased the anger of the sufferer.

"And pray, who is the physician that treats you?" again asked the visitor.

"He is Azrael, (the Angel of Death)! Now, get thee gone!" growled the ailing man.

"Oh, is he?" rejoined the deaf man; "well, you ought to rejoice; for, he is of auspicious footsteps. I saw him but just now, and asked him to give you his best possible attention."

With these words the deaf man withdrew, rejoicing that he had satisfactorily performed a neighbourly duty; while the sick man said, "This fellow is an implacable foe of mine. I did not know that his heart was so full of malignity."

7. (رومی)

An anecdote of Lukman (Æsop).

بود لقمان بیش خواجه خوشتن : در میان بندگانش خوار تن
می فرسناد او غلامان را بیاغ : تا که میوه آیدش بهر فراغ
آن غلامان میوه‌ای جمع را : خوش بخوردند از نهیب طمع را
خواجه را گفتند لقمان خورد آن : خواجه بر لقمان ترش گشت و گران
چون تفحص کرد از لقمان سبب : در جواب خواجه اش بکشاد لب
کامتحان کن جمله ما را ای کریم : سیر ما در ده تو از آب حیم
بعد ازان ما را بصحرای کلان : تو سواره ما پیاده بر دوان
آن گهان بنگر تو بدکردار را : صنعهای کاشف الاسرار را
گشت ساقی خواجه از آب حیم : مرغلامان را و خوردند آن زیم
بعد ازان می راندشان در دشتها : می دویدندی میان کشتها
قی در افتادند ایشان از عنا : آب می آورد زیشان میوها
چون که لقمان را در آمد قی زناف : می در آمد از درویش آب صاف

Lukman (who was a slave) was regarded by his fellow-slaves with hatred. Once the master sent his slaves to his garden to gather fruits for his dessert. The greedy slaves ate some of the fruits, and told the master that it was Lukman who ate them.

The master looked frowningly towards Lukman, and asked him what led him to be guilty of such an act. Lukman in reply said: "O generous master! Make a searching examination of all of us. Give us all plenty of warm water to drink, and then take us to an open plain and make us run—you riding on horseback and we following on foot. You will then see who is the evil doer, and you will witness the ways of the Revealer of Secrets."

The master procured warm water for his slaves, and forced them all to drink it, and then made them run in the fields. This made them throw up the contents of their stomach, and the fruit thus brought to light by the water. But when it was Lukman's turn to vomit, there was nothing but pure water to be seen in the quantity thrown up.

8. (دومی)

The Soofees and the Traveller's Ass.

صوفی در خاتمه از ره رسیدن مرکب خود بر در آخر کشید
صوفیان درویش بودند و فقیر: "کاد فقران یکن کفرأ کبیر"
از سر تقصیر آن صوفی ربه: خر فروشی در گرفتند آن همه
هم در آن دم آن خرک بفروختند: لوت آوردند و شمع افروختند
ولوله افتاد اندر خاتمه: کامشبان لوت و سماع است و وله
چند اذین صبر و اذین سه روزه چند: چند اذین زنبیل و این در یوزه چند
ما هم از خلیق و جان داریم ما: دوات امشب میهمان داریم ما
وان مسافر نیز از راه دراز: خسته بود و دید آن اقبال و ناز
صوفیانش یک یک بنواختند: نزد خدمتگاهش خوش می باختند
آن یکی بایش همی مالید و دست: وان یکی پرسیدش از جای نشست
وان یکی افشاند کرد از رخت او: وان یکی بوسید دستش را و رو
لوت خوردند و سماع آغاز کرد: خاتمه تا سقف شد پر زدود و کرد
دود مطبخ کرد آن پاکوفتن: ز اشتیاق و وجد جان آشوفتن
چون سماع آمد ز اول تا کران: مطرب آغازید یک ضرب کران
خر برفت و خر برفت آغاز کرد: زین ترانه جمله را انباز کرد
زین ترانه پای کوبان تا سحر: کف زنان خر رفت و خر رفت ای پسر
از ره تقلید آن صوفی همین: خر برفت آغاز کرده همچنین
چون گذشت آن نوش و آن جوش سماع: روز گشت و جمله گفتند الوداع
خاتمه خالی شد و صوفی بماند: کرد از رخت آن مسافر می فشاند
رخت از حجره برون آورد او: تا بخر بر بندد آن همراه جو
تا رسد در همراهان او می شتافت: رفت در آخر خر خود را یافت
گفت آن خادم بآتش برده است: زانکه خر دوش آب کمتر خورده است
خادم آمد گفت صوفی خر کجاست: گفت خادم ریش بین جنگی بخاست
گفت من خر را بتو بسپرده ام: من ترا بر خر موکل کرده ام

از تو خواهم آنچه من دادم بتو : باز ده آنچه که بسپردم بتو
گفت من مغلوب بودم صوفیان : حله آوردند و بودم نیم جان
گفت گیرم کر تو ظلماً بستند : قاصدِ خونِ منِ مسکین شدند
تو نیائی و نگویی مر مرا : کان خرت را می برند ای بینوا
گفت والله آمدم من بارها : تا ترا واقف کنم زین کارها
تو همی گفتی که خر رفت ای پسر : از همه گویندگان با ذوق تر
باز می گشتم که او خود واقف است : زین قضا راضیست مرد عارفست
گفت آنرا جمله می گفتند خوش : مر مرا هم ذوق آمد گفتش
مر مرا تقلیدِ شان بر باد داد : که دو صد لعنت بر آن تقلید باد

A Soofee traveller arrived at a monastery. He alighted and took his ass to the stable. The Soofees belonging to that place were all poormen and Durweishes, such as those of whom it is mentioned, "Their poverty will end in impiety."

These people, through their moral deficiency, could not resist the temptation of selling the ass of the traveller ; so they took it slyly to the market, and from the money obtained, purchased provisions and candles, which they brought to the monastery. The report flew from mouth to mouth, "To-night we shall have good feasting, dancing, and rejoicing. How long are we to have patience, and how long are we to keep the three days' fasts? How long should we go on wearing wallets and going a-begging? We too are men, and we too have souls. At last we have this day of Fortune for our guest."

As for the traveller, fatigued as he was with the long journey, these preparations for a feast could not but be pleasing to him.

The Soofees, every one of them, waited on him, trying their best to entertain him. One of them shampooed his limbs, another arranged his bed, another dusted his baggage, while another kissed his hands and face, and so on.

Dinner was provided, and after that, dancing ; and the monastery became full of smoke and dust—smoke from the kitchen, and dust stirred up by the feet of the Soofees, who were dancing in ecstacy. When the dancing was over, the musician struck up a lively tune, and the refrain of his song was—" *The ass is gone ! The ass*

is gone!” in which he was joined by the other Soofees. They kept it up till the morning, clapping with their hands and thumping with their feet to keep time to the music. The Soofee traveller was also infected with the wild mirth, and joined with all his heart in the chorus of “*The ass is gone! The ass is gone!*” When the excitement of the singing and dancing was over, it was morning, and the Soofees bade adieu to the traveller. The monastery became empty and the traveller alone remained. He dusted his baggage, and lugged it out of the room in order to have it packed on the back of his ass. He went to the stable to fetch his ass, but could not find the animal. Said he to himself—“The servant must have taken him to the drinking fount, for the animal had not had any water last night.” Presently the servant appeared, and the traveller asked him where the ass was, to which the former replied with the exclamation—“Look at thy beard!”*

This led to a quarrel between them. The traveller said, “I gave the ass under thy charge, and now I claim back what I entrusted to thee; give me back my ass.”

“I was overpowered by the Soofees who took the ass,” said the servant, “and I was half dead with fear.”

“Granted,” said the traveller, “that the Soofees took the animal from thee by force, thus bringing down misery upon poor me; but why didst thou not come to me to inform me that the ass was taken away?”

“I swear, I did come to inform you of the circumstance,” replied the servant, “but you yourself were engaged in repeating ‘*The ass is gone! The ass is gone!*’—with even greater zest than the others; and so I said to myself, ‘He is aware of what has happened, and shows his acquiescence, being a godly man’; and so I turned back.”

“Alas!” said the traveller, “the others were repeating the expression with great enjoyment, and I too was led away by it to imitate them. Imitation has been my undoing! May there be a hundred curses on that imitation!”

* A phrase implying—“How couldst thou, with such a long beard that thou hast, be so stupid as to speak in this way?”

9. (رومی)

An old man and the physician.

گفت پیری سر طیبی را که من : در زحیم از دماغ خویشتن
گفت از پیریست آن ضعف دماغ : گفت در چشم ز ظلمت هست داغ
گفت از پیریست ای شیخ قدیم : گفت بستم درد می آید عظیم
گفت از پیریست ای شیخ زار : گفت هر چه می خورم نبود گوار
گفت ضعف معده هم از پیری است : گفت وقت دم مرا دم گیری است
گفت آری انقطاع دم بود : چون رسد پیری دو صد عالت شود
گفت یایم سست شد از ره باند : گفت از پیریست در کتبت نشاند
گفت بستم چون کانی شد دوتا : گفت از پیریست این رنج و عنا
گفت تاریکست چشم ای حکیم : گفت کز پیریست ای مرد علیم
گفت ای احق برین بر دوختی : از طیبی تو همین آموختی
ای مدمن عقلت این دانش نداد : که خدا هر درد را درمان نهاد
تو خر احق ز اندک مایگی : بر زمین ماندی ز کوه یایگی
بس طیبیش گفت کای عمر تو شصت : این غضب وین خشم هم از پیری است

An old man went to a physician when the following dialogue took place between them:—

Old man—I am in sore trouble owing to my brain.

Physician—The weakness of the brain is due to old age.

Old man—Dark spots float before my vision.

Physician—This, too, is due to old age, O thou venerable Sheikh.

Old man—Severe pain affects my back.

Physician—This is the result of old age, O emaciated Sheikh.

Old man—No food that I take agrees with me.

Physician—The weakness of the digestive powers is also due to old age.

Old man—I am afflicted with hard breathing.

Physician—Yes, there must be a failing of breath. When old age comes, it brings in its train hundreds of diseases.

Old man—My legs are getting feebler, and I am unable to walk much.

Physician—It is nothing but old age that obliges you to sit in a corner.

Old man—My back has become bent like a bow.

Physician—This trouble is but the consequence of old age.

Old man—I cannot see distinctly, O sage physician.

Physician—Nothing but old age, O wise man.

Old man—O thou idiot, harpest thou on the same theme? Is this all that thou hast learnt of the art of healing? Fool! does not thy reason teach thee this wisdom, that God has appointed a remedy for every complaint?

Thou art but a stupid ass, and with thy little stock of learning art still floundering in the mire.

Physician—O thou who art past sixty! know that even this rage and fury is due to old age.

10. (رومی)

A Schoolmaster and his Pupils.

کودکان در مکتبی از اوستاد : رنج دیدند از ملالِ اجتهاد
مشورت کردند در تعویقِ کار : تا معلم در فتنه در اضطراب
چون نمی آید و را رنجورئی : که بگیرد چند روز او دورئی
تا رهیم از حبس و از تنگیِ کار : هست او چون کوهِ خارا برقرار
آن یکی زیرکترین تدبیر کرد : که بگوید اوستا چونی تو زرد
خیر باشد رنگِ تو بر جای نیست : این اثر یا از هوا یا از تبیست
اندکی اندر خیال افشد ازین : تو برادر هم مدد کن اینچنین
چون در آئی از درِ مکتب بگو : خیر باشد اوستا احوالِ تو
آن خیالش اندکی افزون شود : کز خیالی عاقلی مجنون شود
آن سوم آن چارم آن پنجم چنین : در پی ما غم نمایند و چنین
تا چوسی کودکِ تو اتر این خبر : مستفق گویند یابد مستقر
هریکی گفتش که شاباش ای زکی : باد بخت بر عنایتِ مکتبی
مستفق گشتند در عهدِ وثیق : که نه گرداند سخن را یک رفیق
بعد ازان سوگند داد او جله را : تا که غمّازی نکوید ماجرا

روزگشت و آمدند آن کودکان : بر همین فکر بکشتب شادمان
 جله استادند بیرون منتظر : تا درآید از در آن یارِ مضر
 زانکه منبع او بدست این رای را : سر امام آمد همیشه پای را
 او در آمد گفت استا را سلام : خیر باشد رنگِ روبرو زردفام
 گفت استا نیست رنجی مر مرا : تو برو بنشین مگو یاوه هلا
 این بگفت اما غبارِ وهم بد : اندکی اندر دلش ناگاه زد
 اندر آمد دیگری گفت اینچنین : اندکی آن وهم افزون شد برین
 هم چنین تا وهم او قوت گرفت : ماند اندر حالِ خود بس درشگفت
 خشمگین با زن که مهر اوست سست : من بدین حالم نرسید او نخست
 خود مرا آگه نکرد از رنگِ من : قصد دارد تارهد از رنگِ من
 آمد و در را بتندی وا کشاد : کودکان اندر پیِ آن اوستاد
 گفت زن خیر است چون زود آمدی : که مبادا ذاتِ نیک را بدی
 گفت کوری رنگ و حالِ من بین : از غم بیگانگان اندر حنین
 گفت زن ای خواجه عیبی نیست : وهم و ظن لاشی و بی معنیست
 گفت ای زن تو هنوزی در لجاج : می بینی این قهر و ارتجاج
 جامه خواب مرا روگستران : تا بخسیم که سر من شد گران
 جامه خواب افکند و استا اوفتاد : آه آه و ناله از وی می براد
 کودکان آنجا نشستند و نهان : درس می خواندند با صد اندهان
 کین همه کردیم و ما زندانی ایم : بد بنائی بود و ما بدبانی ایم
 هین دگر اندیشه باید نمود : تا ازین محنت فرج یابیم زود
 گفت آن کودک که ای قوم پسند : درس خوانید و کنید آوا بلند
 چون همی خواندند گفت ای کودکان : بانگِ ما استاد را دارد زبان
 دردِ سر افزاید استا را ز بانگ : ارزداين که درد یابد بهر دانگ ؟
 گفت استا راست می گوید روید : دردِ سر افزون شدم بیرون شوید
 پس بیرون جستند سوی خانها : همچو مرغان در هوای دانا
 مادران شان خشمگین گشتند و گفت : روزِ کتاب و شما با لِهو جفت
 وقتِ تحصیل است اکنون و شما : می گزید از کتاب و اوستا

عذر آوردند کای مادر تو ایست : این گناه از ما و از تقصیر نیست
از قضای آسمان استاد ما : گشت رنجور و سقیم و مبتلا
مادران گفتند مکر است و دروغ : صد دروغ آرید بهر طمع دوغ
ما صباح آئیم پیش اوستا : تا ببینیم اصل این مکر شما
کودکات گفتند بسم الله روید : بر دروغ و صدق ما واقف شوید
بامدادان آمدند آن مادران : خفته استا همچو بیمار گران
هم عرق کرده ز بسیاری لحاف : سر بسته روکشیده در سجاف
آه آهی می کنند آهسته او : جله گان گشتند هم لاجول گو
خیر باشد اوستا این درد سر : جان تو ما را نبوده این خبر
گفت من هم بیخبر بودم ازان : آگهم کردند این خرزادگان

In a school the boys were tired of their teacher, as he was very strict in requiring them to be diligent. So they consulted together for the best means of getting rid of him for a time. Said they: "Why does he not fall ill, so that he may be obliged to be away from us, and we released from confinement and from work? Alas! he stands firm as a rock!"

One of them who was wiser than the rest suggested this plan—

He said: "I shall go to the teacher, and ask him why he looks so pale, saying, 'May it turn out well! But your face has not its usual colour. Is it due to the weather, or to fever?' This will create some disquietude in him. Then you, brother," he continued turning to another boy, "should assist me by using similar words. When you come inside the school-room you should say to the teacher, 'I hope, Sir, you are well.' This will tend to increase his apprehensions, even though in a slight degree. But you know even slight doubts are often enough to make a wise man mad. Then a third, a fourth, and a fifth boy should, one after another, express his sympathy in similar words, till at last when thirty boys successively give expression to words of like nature, the teacher will have his apprehensions confirmed."

The boys praised him for his ingenuity, and wished him success, and they bound themselves by solemn promises not to shirk doing what was expected of them. Then the boy swore them to secrecy, lest any tell-tale should let the matter out.

Next morning the boys came to school with a cheerful appearance, having resolved on adopting the foregoing plan. They all stood outside the school-house, waiting for the arrival of the friend who had helped them at the time of need; for he it was who had originated the plan; it is the head that is the Imām of the legs. The boy arrived, entered the school-room, and greeted the teacher with,—“I hope, Sir, you are well, but the colour of your face is very pale.”

“There is nothing the matter with me. Go, take your seat and don’t talk nonsense,” said the teacher; but inwardly he became somewhat apprehensive.

Another boy came in, and in similar words greeted the teacher, whose misgivings were thereby further increased. And so on, one boy after another greeted him, till his worst apprehensions were confirmed, and he was in great disquietude regarding the state of his health. He got enraged at his wife—“Her love for me is waning. I am in this bad health, and she did not even ask me what was the matter with me. She did not draw my attention to the colour of my face; perhaps she is not unwilling that I should die.”

Full of such thoughts he came home, followed by the boys, and flung open the door. His wife said to him: “I hope nothing is the matter with you. Why have you returned so soon?”

“Art thou blind!” said he; “look at the colour of my face and at my condition; even strangers show sympathetic apprehensions for my health.”

“Well, I see nothing wrong,” replied the wife; “you must be labouring under some senseless delusion.”

“Woman!” said he, “thou art obstinate. Canst thou not see the altered hue of my face, and the shivering of my body? Go get my bed made, that I may lie down, for my head is heavy.”

The bed was prepared, and the teacher lay down on it, giving vent to sighs and groans. The boys were made to sit there and read the lessons, which they did with much vexation. They said to themselves: “We did so much, and still are we in confinement. The foundation was not properly laid, and we are bad architects. Some other plan ought now to be devised speedily, to get rid of this annoyance.”

The clever boy advised them to read their lessons very loudly, and when they did so, he said (loud enough for the teacher to hear): “Boys, your voices disturb the teacher. Loud voices will only

increase his headache. Is it proper that he should be made to suffer pain for the sake of the trifling fees that he gets from us?"

The teacher said: "He is right. Boys, you can go. My headache has increased—clear out."

The boys scampered home, as eagerly as the birds fly towards the place where they see grain.

The mothers of the boys, on seeing them back, got angry, and said to them: "This is time for you to learn writing; and you are engaged in play? This is the time for acquiring knowledge, and you fly from your books and from your teacher?"

The boys urged that it was no fault of theirs, and that they were in no way to blame, for by the decrees of fate their teacher had become very ill.

The mothers said: "This is all deceit and falsehood. You would not scruple to tell a hundred lies to get a little quantity of butter-milk. To-morrow morning we shall go to your teacher and ascertain the truth of your assertions."

"Go! Godspeed you!" said the boys; "and find out what truth or falsehood there is in what we said."

In the morning the mothers came to the teacher, who was lying in bed like a person very ill. He had perspired freely owing to his having covered himself with blankets. His head was bandaged and his face covered with a kerchief; and he was groaning in a feeble voice. The ladies expressed their sympathy, hoped his headache was getting less, and swore by his soul that they were not aware till very lately that he was so ill.

"I too," said the teacher, "was unaware of my illness. It was through those ass-colts that I learnt of it."

11. (رومی)

"Please, Ma'am, it was the cat!"

بود مردی کدخدا او را زنی : سخت طنّاز و یلید و رهزنی
هرچه آوردی تلف کردیش زن : مرد مضطر بود اندر تن زدن
بهر مہمان گوشت آورد آن معیل : سوی خانه با دو صد جہدِ طویل
زن بخوردش با شراب و با کباب : مرد آمد گفت دفعِ نا صواب
مرد گفتش گوشت کو مہمان رسید : پیش مہمان لوت می باید کشید
گفت زن خود گرہ خورد آن گوشت را : گوشت دیگر خر گرت باید ہلا
گفت ای ایبک ترازو را بیار : تا کہ گرہ بر کشم بگیرم عیار

بر کشیدش بود گربه نیم من : پس بگفت آن مرد کای محاله زن
نیم من بد گوشت افزون بود سیر : هست گربه نیم من هم ای سیر
این اگر گربه ست پس آن گوشت کو : و ر بود این گوشت بنما گربه تو

A man had a wife who was of a very quarrelsome disposition, of vicious habits, and of thieving propensities. Whatever the man brought to the house the wife squandered; and for the poor fellow the matter was past endurance.

One day this married man, after much trouble procured some quantity of meat for an expected guest, and brought it home. The wife roasted it and ate it up, taking wine with it. When the man returned she was ready with a lame excuse.

He said: "The guest is come; where is the meat? We should spread a good repast for our guest."

She replied: "The cat has devoured the meat; you will have to go and purchase another quantity."

"O my idol!" said the man, "go bring me a pair of scales that I may weigh the cat and ascertain the truth."

When the cat was weighed she was found to be about half a *mun*.* So he said turning to his wife: "O demure dame! The meat weighed about a seer more than half a *mun*, while this cat also weighs half a *mun*. Well then, if this creature is the cat, where is the meat? And if this is the meat, where is the cat?"

11 A.

[The above story is also given by Jâmy. For the sake of comparison of the styles of the two poets, Jâmy's verses are given below:—]

يك منك گوشت داد خواجه بزني : كش ييز زود بهر طعمه من
گوشت را زن كباب كرد و بخورد : خواجه چون گوشت خواست عذر آورد
كه هنوز آن ز ديك بيرون بود : كه كمين كرد گربه و بر بود
خواجه سنجيد گربه را في الحال : نامد افزون ز گوشت يك مثقال
زد بصد غصه دست بر زانو : كرد با زن عتاب كاي بانو
گربه پيشك چو گوشت يك من بود : گوشت يك من دگر بر آن افزود
نيست اين نكته پيش من روشن : كه تواند شدن دو من يك من
اگر اين گربه است گوشت بكاست : وگر اين گوشت شكل گربه چراست

* The *mun* of Shiraz weighs about 7½ lbs. and of Ispahan about 13 lbs.

The master of the house gave his wife one *mun* of meat, saying—"Cook this quickly for my meal." The woman roasted the meat, and ate it; and when the husband asked for it, urged in excuse, "While the meat was yet to be put into the pot, the cat snatched it, and took it away."

The master immediately weighed the cat, who was found not to outweigh the meat by a single drachm.

In great anger, he smote his thigh with his hand, and addressing the woman, said, "O lady! The cat was only one *mun* in weight, like that meat, and there should have been an additional *mun* of the meat's weight. I cannot understand how two *muns* can become one *mun*! If this is the cat, where is the meat? And if this is the meat, why does it have the shape of a cat?"

12. (روى)

The story of a game of chess.

شاه با دلقك همى شطرنج باخت : مات كردش زود و خشم شه بتافت
گفت شه كت وان شه كبر آوردش : يك يك از شطرنج مى زد بر سرش
كه بگير اينك شهب اى قلتبات : صبر كرد آن دلقك و گفت الامان
دست ديگر باخت فرمود مير : او چنان لرزان كه عود از زمهرير
باخت دست ديگر و شه مات شد : وقت شه شه كهفتن و شهبات شد
بر جهيد آن دلقك و در كنج رفت : شش نمى بر خود فگند از بيم تفت
زير بالشها و زير شش نمى : خفت پنهان تا ز خشم شه رهد
گفت شه همى چه كردى چيست اين : گفت شه شه شه كن اى شاه گزين
كى توان حق گفت جز زير لحاف : با تو اى خشم آور آتش شگاف
اى تو مات و من ز زخم شاهيات : مى زخم شه شه ز زير رختها

Once the Shah played chess with Dalqak, who gave him check-mate. This made the Shah very angry; so when Dalqak, giving the final *check*, said: "Remedy this *check*," the haughty Shah flung at him the chessmen, saying: "Take that for your *check*, you rascal!" Dalqak bore this patiently and asked to be forgiven. The Shah then desired that another game should be played, but poor Dalqak began trembling all over like a naked man exposed to the wintry wind.

However, the second game was played, and the defeat of the Shah seemed inevitable. It was time to say 'check' and 'checkmate,' when up jumped Dalqak, and running into a corner, quickly covered himself with six blankets, from fear. Under the pillows and under six blankets he lay concealed to escape the fury of the king.

"What is this?" asked the Shah in amazement.

"*Check! check!* Remedy the *check*, O noble Shah!" said Dalqak. "How can I tell the truth, except from underneath the blankets, to thee who art of a fiery disposition? It is thou who art checkmated, but as the shock of the checkmate has to be borne by *me*, I am obliged to announce thee the check from underneath the bed coverings!"

13. (رومی)

A thief and his victim.

آن یکی قیج داشت از یس می کشید : دزد قیج را برد و حبله او برید
چونکه آگه شد در آن شد چپ و راست : تا بیاید آن قیج برده بکاست
بر سر چاهی بدید آن دزد را : در فغان و گریه و واویلتا
گفت نالان از چه ای اوستاد : گفت هیان زرم در چه فناد
گر توانی در روی بیرون کشی : خمس بدهم مرا ترا با دلخوشی
هست در هیان من یا نصد درم : گر کنی با من چنین لطف و کرم
صد درم بدهم ترا حالی بدست : گفت با خود کین بهای ده قیج است
گر دری بر بسته شد صد در کشاد : گر قیچی شد در عوض اشتر بداد
جامه ها بر کنند و اندر چاه رفت : جامه ها را هم برد آن دزد تفت

A person who owned a ram was one day going along the road, leading the animal with a string. A thief came from behind, cut the string, and led away the animal.

When the owner became aware of his loss, he began to run right and left in search of his property. Near a well he saw a person (the same thief) who seemed to be crying and lamenting : whereupon he asked him the cause of this lamentation.

"My purse has fallen into the well," said the thief; "if you can go in, and bring it out, I will give you a fifth of its contents right willingly. My purse contains five hundred direms, and if you do me the favour I ask of you, I shall immediately pay you from it one hundred direms."

The man said to himself: "This is the value of ten rams. If one door has closed on me, a hundred have opened; if I lost a ram I get in return the equivalent of a camel." Accordingly he stripped himself of his garments and descended into the well. And the artful thief quickly carried away the garments also!

14. (رومی)

The Musician and the Turk.

مطرب آغازید نزد ترک مست : در حجاب تمه اسرارِ الست
 من ندانم که تو ماهی یا وثن : من ندانم که چه می خواهی زمن
 من ندانم تا چه خدمت آرمت : تن زخم یا در عبارت آرمت
 ای عجب گر نیستی از من جدا : من ندانم من کجایم تو کجا
 هم چنین لب در ندانم باز کرد : من ندانم من ندانم ساز کرد
 چون ز حد شد من ندانم از شگفت : ترک ما را این حرارت دل گرفت
 برجهید آن ترک و دبوسی کشید : تا علیها بر سر مطرب رسید
 گرز را بگرفت سرهنگی بدست : گفت نی مطرب کشی ایندم بداست
 گفت این تکرار بی حد و مرش : کوفت طبعم را بگویم بر سرش
 قلیبانا می ندانی که غور : زانچه می دانی بگو مقصود بر
 آن بگو ای کجیج که می دانیش : من ندانم من ندانم در مکش
 چون بگویم از کجائی بی مری : تو بگوئی فی ز بلخم نر هری
 نی ز روم و نی ز هندونی ز چین : نی ز شام و نی عراق و باردین
 نی ز بغداد و نه موصل نی طراز : در کشی در نی و نی راه دراز
 خود بگو تا از کجائی باز ره : هست تنقیح مناط این جایگاه
 یا پیرسم که چه خوردی تا شتاب : تو بگوئی نی شراب و نی کباب
 نی بقول و نی پنیر و نی بصل : نی ز شیر و نی ز شکر نی عسل
 نی قدید و نی ترید و نی عدس : آنچه خوردی آن بگو تنها و بس

A musician commenced singing of Divine mysteries, in the presence of a Turk who was rather flushed with wine:—"I do not know whether Thou art a moon or an idol; I do not know what Thou requirest of me; I do not know how I should serve Thee—whether I should be silent or whether I should speak of Thee. It is a wonder to me that though Thou art not separate from me, I do not know where Thou art and where I am."

In this way he opened his lips for saying "I do not know"; and "I do not know, I do not know" was the burden of his song. When this grew to a wearisome length, our Turk lost his temper, and seizing a club made a rush at the musician. An officer who was present, caught hold of the club, and said: "Hold! it is a bad deed killing a musician." The Turk said: "He has been hammering at my brains with his endless repetition of the same phrase, and I want to knock him on the head in return."

Then turning to the musician he said: "O thou rascal! if thou knowest not a thing, don't be bothering us about it; tell us what thou *dost* know, and have done with it. Don't prate to us of 'I do not know, I do not know.' When I ask thee, 'To what country dost thou belong?' wilt thou say, 'I am not from Balkh, nor from Herat, nor from Roum, nor from India, nor from China, nor from Syria, nor from Irâq, nor from Bârdein, nor from Baghdad, nor from Moosul, nor from Turaz'? Wilt thou traverse such a long distance of 'nor this and nor that'? Just say whence thou art, and have done with it; this is the place for cutting off superfluities. Or suppose, I ask thee to tell me quickly what thou hast had for dinner; wilt thou reply—'Neither wine, nor roast meat, nor vegetables, nor cheese, nor onions, nor milk, nor sugar, nor honey, nor dried flesh, nor gruel, nor lentils'? Just say what thou hast eaten, and that is enough!"

15. (روى)

The Camel, the Bullock, and the Ram.

اشتر و گاو و قچی دریش راه :: یافتند اندر روش بندر گیاه
گفت قچ قسم ار کنیم آن را یقین :: هیچ يك از ما نگردد سیر اذین
لیك عمر هر که باشد بیشتر :: این علف او راست اولی گو بخورد
هر یکی تاریخ عمر املا کنید :: پیر تر اولی ست باقی تن زیند
گفت قچ عمر من اندر آن عهد :: با قچ قربان اسماعیل بود
گاو گشتا بوده ام هن سال خورد :: جفت آن گاوی کش آدم جفت کرد
چون شنید از گاو و قچ اشتر شکفت :: سر فرود آورد و آن را برگرفت
بر هوا برداشت آن بندر فصیل :: اشتر بختی سبک بی قال و قیل
که مرا خود حاجت تاریخ نیست :: کین چنین جسمی و عالی گردنی ست
خود همه کس داند ای جان پدر :: که نباشم از شما من خرد تر

A camel, an ox, and a ram, while going together, found in the road a truss of hay. The ram said: "If we divide this amongst us, the share of each will hardly be sufficient to satisfy our hunger. Therefore, let him who is more aged than the others devour this fodder alone, for he deserves it. Let every one mention the date of his birth, and let preference be given to the oldest, while the others should give themselves to resignation."

On noticing their approval the ram continued: "I was a contemporary of the ram who was sacrificed by Abraham in lieu of his son Ishmail."

The ox said: "I am much older, for I was a companion of the ox whom Adam employed in ploughing."

The camel, on hearing these words from the ram and the ox, was lost in astonishment. He, however, without losing any time on words, lowered his head, picked up the truss of hay, and held it high up in the air. Then said he: "I do not think it is necessary for me, who have such a big body and such a long neck, to mention my age; for every one knows that I, with this body, cannot be younger than you."

16. (رومی)

The Jew, the Christian, and the Mahomedan.

آن جهود و مومن و ترسا مگر : همري کردند باهم در سفر
چون رسیدند این سه همراه منزلی : هدیه شان آورد حلوا مقبلی
تخمه بودند آن دو بیگانه ز خور : بود صائم روز آن مومن مگر
چون نیاز شام آن حلوا رسید : بود مومن مانده در جوع شدید
آن دو کس گفتند ما از خور یریم : امشبان بنهیم و فردا می خوریم
صبر گیریم از خور امشب تن زنی : بهر فردا لوت را پنهان کنیم
گفت مومن امشب این خورده شود : صبر را بنهیم تا فردا شود
یس بدو گفتند ازین حکمت گری : قصد تو اینست تا تنها خوری
گفت ای یاران که نه ما سه تنیم : چون خلاف افتاد قسمت می کنیم
هر که خواهد قسم خود بر جان زند : وانکه خواهد قسم خود پنهان کند
آن دو گفتندش ز قسمت درگذر : زانکه قسمت نیک ناید در نظر

فصدشان آن کان مسلمان غم خورد : شب پر او در بی نوائی بگذرد
 بود مغلوب او بتسلیم و رضا : گفت سمعاً طاعتاً اصحابنا
 پس بختند آن شب و برخاستند : بامدادان خویش را آراستند
 آن یکی گفت که هر يك خوابِ خویش : آنچه دید او دوش گو آرد بیش
 هر که خوابش به بود حلوا خورد : قسم هر مفضل را فاضل برد
 پس جهود آورد آنچه دیده بود : تا کجا شب روح او گردیده بود
 گفت در ره موسم آمد بیش : گرگ بیند دنبه اندر خوابِ خویش
 در پیِ موسی' شدم تا کوه طور : هر سه تن گشتیم نا پیدا ز نور
 باز ملاکی همی دیدم شگرف : صورتِ ایشان بُد از اجرامِ برف
 حلقه دیگر ملايك مسعین : صورتِ ایشان همه بود آتشین
 بعد ازان ترسا در آمد در کلام : که مسیح رو نمود اندر منام
 پس شدم با او بچارم آسمان : مرکز و مشوای خورشیدِ جهان
 پس مسلمان گفت ای یازانِ من : بیشم آمد مصطفی' سلطانِ من
 پس مرا گفت آن یکی بر طور تاخت : با کلیم حق و زرد عشق باش
 وان دگر را عیسی صاحبِ قران : برد بر اوجِ چهارم آسمان
 خیز ای پس مانده دیده ضرر : باری این حلوا ی نخنی ^{فستق} بخور
 من بفرمانِ چنان شاه جهان : خوردم آندم کاسه حلوا و نان
 پس بگفتندش که ای ابله حریص : ای عجب خوردی ز حلوا و خدیس
 گفت چون فرمود آن شاه مطاع : من که باشم که کنم زان امتناع
 تو جهود از امرِ موسی' سر کشی : گر بخواند در خوشی یا نا خوشی
 تو مسیحی هیچ از امرِ مسیح : سر توانی تافت از خوب و قبیح
 من ز فخرِ انبیا چون سر کشم : خوردم آن حلوا و ایندم سرخوشم
 پس بگفتندش که والله خوابِ راست : تو بدیدی وین به از صد خوابِ ماست

A Jew, a Mahomedan, and a Christian were companions in a journey. When the three reached a halting stage, some one brought them a dish of *Halwâ* as a present. The Mahomedan was hungry, owing to his having kept a fast, but the other two had their stomachs full.

It was time for evening prayer when the *Halwâ* arrived, and the Mahomedan was ravenously hungry. The other two said: "We have no appetite to-day, let us lay by this dish for to-morrow. To-night we should have patience, and to-morrow we may eat this food." The Mahomedan said: "Let us rather eat the food to-day, reserving patience for to-morrow." Then they said, "By this ruse you want to eat it up all alone?" He replied: "Friends, are we not three men? Since we cannot agree, let us make a division of the food, and let every one according to his wish either consume his share or lay it by." The two said, "Give up that notion, we approve not of such division."

Their intention was to make the Mahomedan feel miserable, and to have him pass the night on an empty stomach. He could not help but be resigned, so he said: "Hearing is obeying, O my masters!"

Then they slept for the night; and when they awoke in the morning they began to make their toilets. One of them said: "Let each of us relate his dream of the previous night, and whosoever had the best dream should eat the *Halwâ*; the worthy man should receive the share of the unworthy."

Then the Jew began to relate how his soul had roamed about at night. Said he: "I met Moses on the road"—the wolf sees the sheep in his dreams—"and I followed him, and reached the Mount Horeb, and we were all immersed in a flood of light. Again, I saw some wonderful angels who seemed to have their bodies made of snow. There was another group of assistant angels who seemed made all of fire."

The Christian then began to speak, saying, "Messiah appeared to me in my dream, and I went with him to the fourth Heaven, wherein is the centre and orbit of the Sun."

The Mussulman then said: "Friends! To me, in my dream, appeared Mustafâ, the lord of my soul, and he said to me: 'One of your companions has gone to Mount Horeb with him who talked with God (*i.e.*, Moses), and is deeply engaged in the game of Divine love; while the other has been carried to the fourth Heaven by Jesus, the Lord of conjunction.* O you who have been left behind, and have seen affliction! get up and eat the *Halwâ* that is kept for future use.' Then I in obedience to the order of this Prince of the world, did justice to the dish of *Halwâ* and *Nân*!"

* *i.e.*, fortunate planetary conjunction at the time of birth.

The others exclaimed: "O you greedy blockhead! Have you eaten up all the *Halicâ* made of dates and butter?"

He replied: "When I was ordered so to do by the Prince whose command is binding on all, who am I that I should disobey? You, Jew, will you disobey the order of Moses whether it be agreeable to your wishes or not? And you, Christian, will you disregard the commands of Messiah whether they appear to you good or bad? How could I then be slow to obey the best of prophets? I ate the *Halicâ*, and at this moment, I am happy!"

Then they said to him: "We swear, it was you who saw the right dream—a dream that was a hundred times better than the dreams seen by us."

17. (دوی)

The Athlete who wanted to be tattooed.

سوی دلاکی بشد قزوینی : که بودم زن بکت شیرینی
گفت چه صورت زنم ای پهلوان : گفت بر زن صورت شیر زبان
گفت برچه موضعت صورت زنم : گفت برشانه گهم زن آن رقم
چونکه او سوزن فرو بردن گرفت : درد آن در شانه گه مسکن گرفت
پهلوان در ناله آمد کای سنی : مرا کشتی چه صورت می زنی
گفت! آخر شیر فرمودی مرا : گفت از چه عضو کردی ابتدا
گفت از دُمگاه آغازیده ام : گفت دُم بگذار ای دو دیده ام
از دُم و دُمگاه شیرم دُم گرفت : دُمگه او دُم گهم محکم گرفت
شیر بی دُم باش گو ای شیر ساز : که دلم سستی گرفت از زخم گاز
جانب دیگر گرفت آن شخص زخم : بی محابا و مواسایی و رحم
بانگ زد او کین چه اندامست ازو : گفت این گوشست ای مرد نکو
گفت تا گوشش نباشد ای حکیم : گوش را بگذار و کوه کن کلیم
جانب دیگر خلش آغاز کرد : باز قزوینی فغانی ساز کرد
کان سوم جانب چه اندامست نیز : گفت اینست اشکم شیر ای عزیز
گفت گو اشکم نباشد شیر را : خود چه اشکم باید این ادبیر را
بر زمین زد سوزن آن دم استاد : گفت در عالم کسی را این فتاد
شیر بی دُم و سرو اشکم که دید : این چنین شیری خدا خود نافرید

A Qazwini went to a barber (a tattooer), and said, "Perform tattooing on me; do me this favour." The latter asked, "What figure should I mark, O hero?" He said, "Let it be the form of a terrible lion." "On what part of the body should I make the mark?" asked the barber. "Let the marking be on my shoulder-blade," said the man.

When the artist began to puncture with the needle, the shoulder-blade felt the pain of the process. The athlete cried out, "O worthy man, you are killing me! What figure is it that you are marking?" "The lion, of course, as you asked me to do!" said the artist. "With what limb of the animal are you making a beginning?" asked the man. "I have begun with the root of the tail," replied he. "Oh, give that up, dear man! The tail and tail-root have deprived me of breath; the beast's tail-root has held my lungs in a crushing grip! O lion-maker, let the lion be without a tail, for my heart is sinking with the pricks of the needle," said our hero.

The artist began pricking in another direction, without respect, or sympathy, or pity. The man roared out—"What organ of the lion is it now?" "This is the ear, good man," said the other. "Let the beast be without ears, O wise man," rejoined the man; "give up the ear and cut the matter short."

In another direction started the artist his puncturing, when again the Qazwini screamed out—"What organ now is it in this third direction?" The other said, "This is the belly of the lion, dear sir." "Let the lion be without a belly!" rejoined our hero; "why should this wretched thing have a belly at all?"

The artist forthwith dashed the needle to the ground, saying—"Has such a thing happened to any one in the world! Who ever beheld a lion without tail or head or belly? Such a lion even God himself has not created!"

18. (دوی)

Nice Quarters.

آن عزیزی خانه می جست از شتاب : دوستی بردش سوی خانه خراب
گفت او این را اگر سقفی بَدی : بهلوی من مرا مسکن شدی
هم عیال تو بیاسودی اگر : در میان داشتی حجره دگر
گفت آری بهلوی یاران به است : لیک ای جان در اگر نتوان نشست

A stranger was hurriedly looking for a house; a friend took him to one that was dilapidated.

Said he, "If this house had a roof, you would have a dwelling near my own. Your family also would be comfortable if it had another room in it."

The stranger answered, "Yes, to be in the vicinity of friends is pleasant, but, my dear friend, one cannot dwell in 'If'!"

19. (روی)

The Catchpole and the Inebriate.

محتسب در نیم شب جائی رسید : در بن دیوار مستی خفته دید
گفت هی مستی چه خوردستی بگو : گفت ازین خوردم که هست اندر سبو
گفت آخر در سبو واگو که چیست : گفت از آنکه خورده ام گفت آن خفست
گفت آنچه خورده آن چیست آن : گفت آنچه در سبو مخفست آن
دوری شد این سوال و این جواب : ماند چون خر محتسب اندر خلاب
گفت او را محتسب هین آه کن : مست هو هو کرد هنگام سخن
گفت گفتم آه کن هو می کنی : گفت من شاد و تو از غم دم زنی
آه از درد و غم بیدادست : هوی هوی میکشان از شادست
محتسب گفت این ندانم خیز خیز : معرفت تراش بگذار این ستیز
گفت رو تو از جکا من از جکا : گفت مستی خیز تا زندان یا
گفت مست ای محتسب بگذار رو : از برهنه کی توان بردن گرو
گر مرا خود قوت رتن ببدی : خانه خود رفتی وین کی شدی

A Muhtasib (police officer) at midnight reached a place, where he saw a drunken man lying at the foot of a wall. He said, "Hallo! You are drunk! Tell me what you have drunk." He answered, "I have drunk this which is in the jar." He said, "But tell me what, after all, is in the jar." He answered, "The very thing that I have taken."

The Muhtasib said, "This is quite obscure. What is it that you have drunk?" The man answered, "That which is hidden in the jar."

The question and answer was like moving in a circle. The Muhtasib stuck in the mire like an ass.

The Muhtasib said, "Come, say 'Ah'."* The drunken man uttered 'Hoo Hoo'* in response.

He said, "I told you to say 'Ah' and you say 'Hoo'." The man rejoined, "I am joyous and you are giving vent to the sound of grief. 'Ah' proceeds from pain and from the grief of injustice; the 'Hoo Hoo' of the wine-drinkers is from joyousness."

The Muhtasib said, "I know not this. Get up! Get up! Do not be a wiseacre, and do not bandy words." He replied, "Go, what relation is there between you and me?"

The Muhtasib said, "You are drunk; get up, and come to prison." The drunken man said, "O Muhtasib go, leave me alone. How can one obtain anything as security from a naked man? Had I, indeed, the power to go, I should have gone home, and then how should this have come about?"

20. (رومی)

The Fool Jooki.†

کودکی در پیش تابوت پدر : زار می نالید و بر می کوفت سر
کای پدر آخر کجایت می برند : تا ترا در زیر خاکی آورند
می برندت خانه تنگ و زحیر : نی در اوقالی و بی دروی حصیر
نی چراغی در شب و نی روز نان : نی در آن بوی طعام و نی نشان
نی درش معمور نی بر بام راه : نی یکی همسایه کدو باشد پناہ
زین نسق اوصاف خانه می شمرد : وز دو دیده اشک خونین می فشرد
گفت جوحی با پدر ای ارجمند : والله این را خانه ما می برند
گفت جوحی را پدر ابله مشو : گفت ای بابا نشانیها شنو
این نشانیها که گفت او یک یک : خانه ماراست بی تزویر و شک
بی حصیر و بی چراغ و بی طعام : نی درش معمور نی صحن و نه بام

A boy was bitterly lamenting and beating his head before his father's bier, saying: "O father, to what place are they, then, taking you, to put you under the earth! They are taking you to an

* In saying 'Ah' (which also means 'a sigh') there is exhalation of breath which might reveal the drink one has taken. 'Hoo Hoo' is expressive of joy. 'Hoo' also means 'He', and is a name of God.

† A celebrated jester among Arabs.

abode that is narrow and wretched, wherein there is no carpet or mat; neither lamps at night nor windows*; neither smell nor sign of food. Neither has it a door in good condition nor is there a way to the terrace, and there is no helping neighbour nigh you."

In this fashion he was enumerating the particulars of the place, whilst he shed bitter tears from his eyes.

Joohi said to his father, "O worthy sire, by Allah, they are taking him to *our* house!" The father said to Joohi, "Don't be a fool!" He rejoined, "O father, hear the indications. These that he has given one by one apply to our house, without any doubt or deceit: no mat, no lamp, no food, no door in good condition, no court, no terrace!"

21. (مثنوی نعمت خان عالی)

Quite a Logical Conclusion!

نیم شب شخصی ز بس فریاد کرد : خفته را از قید خواب آزاد کرد
غلغلی انگیزخت همچون نفخ صور : خفتگان جستند از نزدیک و دور
بانگ می زد های دزد و های دزد : خانه ام را یک رُفت این زن بزد
می رود امشب دروغا مال و جان : وقت غم خوار است ای همسایگان
زود تر آید تا نگریزد او : دیر اگر آید خونم ریزد او
آمدند آنجا همه در دست شمع : گرد او پروانه سان گشتند جمع
هر یکی در جستجو یک سو دوید : هیچ کس دزدی در آن خانه ندید
زو پیرسیدند دیدی گفت نه : یا صدای او شنیدی گفت نه
باز گفتندش که خوابی دیده : از کجا دزد آمدت فهمیده
گفت از مردم شنیدم بارها : این که دزدی چون درآید در سرا
پوشد از رام دغا کفش نم : تا مباد آوازی یا جایی رسد
من چو دیدم نیست هیچ آوازی : شد یقین که دزد آمد در سرا
گر نه او کفش نم پوشیده است : پس چرا گوشم صدا نشنیده است

One midnight a person with his loud cries awoke the sleeping neighbours. He continued his vociferations in tones loud as those of Israfil's trumpet, and those who were sleeping far and near jumped out of their beds. He kept crying out: "Thief! Thief! This pimp is stripping my house of everything! O neighbours! come

* The expression *نی روز نان* if read separately as *نی روز نان* would also mean, 'nor bread in daytime.'

and help me: my life and my property are in danger! Come soon that he may not escape! If you come late, he will murder me!"

The neighbours came there with lights in their hands and collected round him as moths round a candle. They searched in every nook and corner of the house for the thief, but not the slightest trace could they find of him. They then asked him: "Have you seen the thief yourself?" "No," said he, "Then, have you heard any noise made by the thief?" "No." "Well, then did you *dream* of a thief? What else could have put that idea into your head?" "I have often heard it said," replied he, "that when a thief enters a house, he is cunning enough to put on shoes of felt, so that his footsteps may make no noise. As I did not hear any sound of footsteps, I was convinced that there was a thief in the house, for how could the silence be otherwise explained than by the thief having put on felt shoes?"

22. (فریدالدین عطار)

The Bumpkin and the Pumpkin.

کُردی از آشوبِ گردشای دهر : کرد از صحرا و کوه آهنگِ شهر
دید شهری پرفغان و پر خروش : آمد از انبوهی مردم بجوش
آن یکی را از برون عزیم درون : وان دگر را از درون میلِ برون
آن یکی را از بین رو در شمال : وان دگر سوی یمن جنبش سگال
کرد مسکن چون بدید آن کار و بار : از میانه کرد جا بر یک کنار
گفت جا گر در صفِ مردم کنم : جای آن دارد که خود را گم کنم
یک نشانه بهر خود نا کرده ساز : خویشتن را چون توانم یافت باز
اتفاقاً یک کدو بودش بدست : آن کدو بهر نشان بر پای بست
تا چو خود را گم کند در شهر و کو : باز جوید چون بیند آن کدو
زیرکی آن راز را دانست زود : در پَیش افتاد تا جامی غنود
آن کدو را حالیا زو باز کرد : بر پیِ خود بست و خواب آفاز کرد
کرد چو پیدار شد دید آن کدو : بسته بر پای کسی پهلوی او
بانگ بروی زد که خیز! بست کیش : کز توحیران مانده ام در کار خویش
این منم یا تو نمی دانم درست : ور منم چون این کدو در پای تست
ور توئی ای من بجایم کیستم : در شماری می نیایم چیستم

By the vicissitudes of fortune a Kurd left his mountain and forest, and came into a city. The city appeared to him full of noise and tumult, and the jostling of the crowds of people bewildered him. There were some who were pushing their way from the inside to the outside, while there were others who from outside were trying to get in. There were some who from the right turned to the left, while others were endeavouring to go from the left to the right.

The poor Kurd, on seeing this state of affairs, chose a corner remote from the centre of traffic.

Said he to himself, "If I mingle with the crowd, it is very likely that I shall lose myself. Unless I prepare for my identification a distinguishing mark, how shall I be able to find myself again?"

He happened to have a pumpkin in his hand, and this he tied to his leg by way of identification, so that if he were to get lost in the city and in the lanes, he could, by seeing the pumpkin, assure himself of his identity!

A shrewd man at once guessed what was passing in his mind, and followed him till he came to a place where he went to sleep. He forthwith untied the pumpkin from the Kurd's leg, fastened it to his own, and lay down to sleep. When the Kurd awoke he saw the pumpkin tied to the leg of some one by his side. He bawled out, "Get up, O thou inebriate! thou that art the cause of my bewilderment! I know not for certainty if this body is myself or thou! If it is myself, how came the pumpkin to be on thy leg? And if it is thyself, where am I, and who am I? I seem to be of no count—what am I?"

23. (فریدالدین عطار)

The Wisdom of the Witless.

مگر دیوانه می شد براهی : سر خر دید در بالینزگاهی
 بدیشان گفت چون خرسد لکدکوب : چرا هست استخوانش بر سر چوب
 چنین گفتند کای پرسنده راز : برای آن که دارد چشم بد باز
 چو شد دیوانه زین معنی خبردار : بدیشان گفت کای مشتی چکرخوار
 گر آنستی که این خر زنده بودی : بسی زین کار او را خنده بودی
 شما را مغز خر داد است ایام : از آنست این سر خر بسته در دام
 نکرد این زنده چوب از پشت خود دور : چگونه مرده دارد چشم بد دور

A crazy man passing along a road saw an ass's head put up in a kitchen-garden. He enquired: "Since the kicking ass has died, why is his skull here on the pole?" The people replied, "O inquisitive one! It is thus put up that it may ward off the evil eye."

When the daft man learnt this, he said, "Ye parcel of idiots! If this ass had been alive, he would have laughed excessively at this folly of yours. Fate has endowed you with asinine brains, which is the reason why you have thus put up an ass's skull. The beast, when alive, could not ward off the blows of the stick from his back, and now when dead, how can he ward off the evil eye?"

24. *The Musalman caught tippling.*

بود مسلمانی از اقصای ری : با منی اندر رمضان خورد می
 محاسب آمد بصلابت برون : گفت که ریزید ازین هردو خون
 مغ ز میان گفت که این شرط نیست : جانب من روزه و روزی یکست
 جزیه دهم تند چه رانی سخت : هر که بدین تو بر او امر کن
 گشت مقرر که ز مغ بگذرند : دست سیاست بمسلمان برند
 دید مسلمان که قوی بی' هشدند : مغ بگذارند و مسلمان کشند
 گفت ظریفانه که ای انجمن : علت من شد مگر اسلام من
 گربه همین واقعه خواهید کشت : من منعم و بچه هفتاد پشت

Somewhere near Rai there was a Musalmân, who was caught drinking wine with a Magian in the month of Ramazân. The magistrate came up in high dudgeon, and ordered that both should be slain. The Magian spoke out: "This is not according to the Law. To me fasting and feasting are alike. I pay the poll-tax (for being allowed to follow my own faith), and why should you use harsh words against me? Your jurisdiction in such matters extends over only those who are of your own religion."

It was, therefore decided that the Magian should be let off. The Musalmân saw that they were a set of egregious fools, since they let off a Magian and were ready to kill a Musalmân. He therefore said facetiously: "O ye people! Is it a crime that I am a follower of Islam? If this be your plea for killing me, I declare myself to be a Magian, nay, a Magian of the seventieth generation!"

PLAY ON WORDS AND MACARONIC VERSES.

—:O:—

In the following six couplets, the first and the second verses read the same, but have different meanings.

1.

من نیازدارم ار تو نازاری : من نیاز آرم ار تو ناز آری

I will not harm you if you do not harm me; I will humble myself if you display gracefulness.

2. (مهمی)

که به احوال زار من نگرست : که به احوال زار من نگرست

Who was he that did not weep for my miserable condition, on seeing the wretched plight I am in?

3. (رومی)

آن دگر شیر است کادم می خورد : وان دگر شیر است کادم می خورد

That is one kind of شیر that eats mankind, and that is another kind of شیر that mankind eat.

[شیر in the first verse means 'a lion', and in the second verse 'milk.']

4

چون ازو گشتی همه چیز از تو گشت : چون ازو گشتی همه چیز از تو گشت

When you become His (i.e., God's) everything becomes yours; when you turn from Him, everything turns from you.

5. (امیر خسرو)

زر بخش حدیث بدرها کن : زر بخش حدیث بدرها کن

O gold-giver, talk of money-bags; give gold, and leave off bad talk.

6. (امیر خسرو)

نظم تو چکانست نیکتر گوهر بار : نظم تو چه کانست نیکتر گوهر بار

Your verses are fluent: recite better every time. Your verses are like a mine, showering purer gems.

In the following six specimens, instead of whole lines, some expressions are repeated but with different meanings.

7.

خورده همت به که به تنها خوری : وای بر آن خورده که تنها خوری

It is better to take food with one's companions. Fie! if your food you eat alone.

8.

دلازاری مکن باری بکن دلازاری : دلازاری نکو نبود نکو باشد دلازاری

Never indulge in tormenting the hearts (of people), but, O my heart! weep thou at times. Tormenting the hearts (of people) is not good, O my heart! weeping is good.

9.

دردا که در دیار شما دردیار نیست : وازا که دردیار بود در دیار نیست

Alas! In your country there is no love for the Beloved, and he that has love for the Beloved is not in the country.

10

بگذر از عشق مجازی زانکه بیش اهل دل :

هست دل برداشتن بهتر ز دلبر داشتن :

Give up illusory Love, for to real lovers renunciation is better than having a sweetheart.

11. (صائب)

از تو تا دوریم از ما دور می گردد حیات :

با تو چون برمی خوریم از زندگی برمی خوریم :

When we are far from thee, life too is far from us; when we meet thee, then we enjoy the fruits of life.

12. (مہجور اصفہانی)

هنگام نزع یوسف من از سفر رسید : عزم بسر رسید چو عزم بسر رسید

'At the time of my last breath my Joseph returned from his journey. My existence came to an end when my life (i.e., the beloved) came to my head (i.e., near the pillow).

In the following six pieces the poets make a pun on the word *مردم* which means 'the pupil of the eye' as well as 'people'.

13.

صف کشیده هر دو مزگان بهر جنگ استاده اند .
صلح خواهد شد که مردم در میان افتاده اند .

The eyelashes are like two armies opposed in battle array, but they will not fight since men have intervened as peacemakers. (Or—since the pupils are between them.)

14. (آزاد کشیری)

نمی خواهم که در چشم نشینی . که این جا هم میان مردمانست

I do not want you to have a place in mine eyes, for here too you would be in the midst of men! (Or—within the pupils.)

15.

طفل اشکم با وجود آن که مردم زاده است .
اولم بر رو دوید آخر گریانم گرفت .

My child-like tear, in spite of being born of worthy people (or—born of the pupils), at first rushed on my face, and then caught hold of my collar.

16. (حافظ)

ز گریه مردم چشم نشسته در خون است .
بین که در طلبت حال مردمان چون است .

The pupils of my eyes are sitting in blood (i.e., are bloodshot) with weeping. See what is the condition of the people (or—condition of the pupils) who are yearning for thee.

17. (شتری لاهوری)

هر اشک که از چشم من غمزه ریزد .
طفلیست که از صحبت مردم بگریزد .

Every tear-drop, that falls from my sorrowing eye, is a child that flies from the society of people. (Or—from the society of the pupils.)

18. (عبدالکریم شاملو)

ترا در دیده جا دادم که از مردم نهان باشی :
 ندانستم که آنجا هم میان مردمان باشی :

I lodged thee in mine eyes to hide thee from men. I knew not that there too thou wouldst be *in the midst of men* ! (Or—in the midst of the pupils.)

19. (اکبر بادشاه)

من بنگ نمی خورم می آرید : من چنگ نمی زنم نی آرید

I do not take 'Bhang'; *bring wine*. I do not play on the harp; *bring a flute*.

[The underlined Persian words when written in a connected form می آرید and نی آرید also mean 'do not bring it.']

20.

بی تو چون در گریه خوابم می برد : خراب می بینم که آیم می برد

When sleep overtakes me while I am weeping for your absence, I see a dream that I am carried off by a stream (of tears). (Or—I see that sleep is the cause of my disgrace.)

21

آن شاه که خویش را هلاکومی گفت : وز ناز سخن بچشم و ابرو می گفت
 بر کنگره سرای او فاخته : دیدم که نشسته بود کو کو می گفت

On the battlements of the castle of the king, who called himself Halákoo, and the slightest gesture from whose eyes and eyebrows was law, I saw a ring-dove sitting, *who was uttering its cry of 'coo-coo.'* (Or—who was saying 'Where is he? Where is he?')

22

هیچ کس همت ندارد همچو سوزن در جهان :
 با وجود تنگ چشمی پرده پوش عالم است :

No one in the world possesses the magnanimity of the needle, *who in spite of its narrow-mindedness, draws a veil over the faults of mankind.* (Or—who in spite of its having a small 'eye', mends rents in the dress of people, covering their nakedness.)

23.

سعدی درین دیار تو مردِ مسافری : با کس سخن مگوی که گجراتیان زنند

* Sa'adi! thou art a stranger in this country; *speak not to any one, for the Gujratees will strike you.* (Or—do not tell any one that the Gujratees are effeminate.)

24.

سعدی تو جوهری و سخنانِ تو کوهراند : ارزان ازان فروش که گجراتیان خرنند

* Sa'adi! you are a jeweller, and your words are pearls, but you will have to sell them cheaply *in order that the Gujratees may buy them.* (Or—for the Gujratees are asses.)

25.

A horse-dealer once wrote to Asad-ullah Khan:—

اسیم خریده اند و بن باز می دهند : ای خواجه در دیارِ شما اینچنین خرنند

A horse has been purchased from me, and now it is returned to me. O Khwajah, *is this the system of purchase in your country?* (Or—are there such asses to be met with in your country?)

The following was the reply sent:—

مایان نخریم و نی فروشیم : آنها که خرنند می فروشند

We ourselves neither buy nor sell. *Those who buy, do it for the sake of selling again.* (Or—they are asses who sell.)

26.

روز و شب خواهم همین از کردگار : تا سرت باشد همیشه تاجدار

Day and night I ask this boon from God that your head may ever remain crowned.

[If the last word تاجدار be read separately, thus—تاج دار—the meaning is quite altered—*Day and night I ask of God that your head may crown the gallows.*]

27.

مادرت را هزار بوسه زدیم : بدرت کس نبود الا من

We kissed your door (*i.e.*, threshold) a thousand times. There was no one at your door except myself. (Or—*We kissed your mother a thousand times. None but myself is your father.*)

* This Sa'adi is Sa'adi Deccani, not the celebrated poet of Shiraz.

28.

✓ The poet 'Àqil Khán once said to the poetess Zeb-un-nisa سنڀوسه بيسن خواهم 'I want patties of gram-flour.' Her reply was 'Get them from our kitchen.' از مطبخ ما در طلب

Now both the request and the reply have a deeper secondary meaning. سنڀوسه is the word سنڀوسه without the prefix سن i.e., بوسه or kiss, which was what the poet really wanted. And Zeb-un-nisa's reply (taking the words ما and در as forming one word) also means—'Get it from the kitchen wenches of thy mother.'

29. (امير خسرو)

زبان آن پری ترکی و من ترکی نمی دانم .
چه خوش بودی اگر بودی زبانش در دهان من .

Turkish is the tongue of that fairy, while Turkish I know not. How charming would it be *were her tongue in my mouth!* (Or—if I could speak her language.)

30. (بهائی)

با آنکه در ره عشق در منزل نخستم . چندان گریستم خون کز دیده دست شستم

Although I am but a tyro in love-matters, I have wept so much that *I can wash my hands with tears.* (Or—I have wept so much that *I have hopelessly lost my eyes.*)

31.

قاضی بیاض رفت و هم او روزه دار بود . شهتوت خورد و روزه قاضی بجا ماند

A Kázi who had observed a fast, went to a garden, and ate mulberries; but the fast of the Kázi was not broken.

[The play here is on the Persian word for mulberries, which is شتوت as well as شهتوت. So the first part of the second verse also means, 'The king ate mulberries,' and of course the fast of the Kázi was not broken.]

32. (میر عبدالحق استرآبادی)

همی گشت در شهر شخصی زجر جان . که قاضی شود صدر راضی نمی شد
برشوت خری داد تا گشت قاضی . اگر خر نمی بود قاضی نمی شد

A person came from Jurján to our city, and went about trying to become a Kázi but the minister was not willing to make him one. So he gave to the minister an ass, as a bribe, and thus got the post. *Had there not been an ass, he would not have become a Kazi.* (Or—*had he not been an ass, he would not have become a Kazi.*)

33.

دید چون محرابِ ابرویِ بتانِ جلوه ساز ۛ
جای آن دارد که شیخ شهر بگذارد نماز ۛ

If the Sheikh of the city were to see the arch of the eyebrows of the resplendent beauties, it would be but meet that *he should offer his prayers*. (Or—*he should give up praying*.)

[The Arch in the mosque is the point to which the congregation turn the face when praying.]

34. (شرف‌الدین 'شفروه)

جز حلقهٔ خلخال و سوارِ دست ۛ پایِ تو که دارد و زبردستِ تو کیست

Except the anklet and the wristlet, *who can resist thee, and who is stronger than thou?* (Or—*who holds thy foot, and who is mounted on thy hand?*)

35.

نازینی که در عرق تر شد ۛ نازنین بود نازنین تر شد

A Beauty who becomes soaked in perspiration, was lovely before, but now *is lovelier*. (Or—*is a soaked beauty*.)

36. (سایمان ساوجی)

مطربا راهِ طرب خوش بزن امروز که نیست ۛ
جز تو در عهدِ شهنشاهِ جهانِ راهزنی ۛ

Musician! strike up a merry tune to-day, for in the reign of the king of the world, there is, except thee, *no highwayman*. (Or—*no striker of tunes*.)

37.

شمع می گوید باهلر بزم با سوز و گداز ۛ
سر بریدنِ پیشِ این سنگینِ دلان گل چیدن است ۛ

The candle, with much heart-burning, tells the people of the assembly that, with these hard-hearted persons, cutting off the head *is like culling roses*. (Or—*is snuffing the candle*.)

[گل is the charred portion of the candle-wick which requires snuffing.]

38. (قاسمی)

راست رو باش به هر کیش که باشی چون تیر .

ور شوی کج چو کان قابلِ قربان باشی .

Whatever be thy faith, be straight-going as the arrow; if you become crooked like the bow, you will deserve to be sacrificed. (Or—to be placed in the sheath.)

39.

بر کس چو بدوستی رقم نتوان زد . در راه یگانگی قدم نتوان زد

جز آئینه رویِ همدی نتوان دید . زو نیز چه فایده چو دم نتوان زد

Since you cannot give your friendship to any one, you cannot traverse the path of union. Except the mirror's face no companion's face you can behold. And this, too, of what avail, since *talk with it one cannot*? (Or—since one cannot breathe on the mirror?)

40.

تیغ تو بقطع و فصلِ کارِ دشمن . هر جا که برفت سرخ رو باز آمد

Thy sword, in order to settle the affair of the enemy, wherever it went, returned *successful*. (Or—blood-stained.)

41. (ظہیر فارابی)

گفتار تلخ زان لب شیرین نه در خورست .

خوش کن عبارتی که خط هر چه خوشترست .

Bitter words become not these sweet lips of thine; make thy style pleasant to match thy *handwriting* which is so charming. Or—to match the down on thy cheek.)

42.

گر همسری کنند بخطِ نافه ختن . نبود ازو غریب که در نسل او خطاست

If the musk of Khotan dares to compete with the down on thy cheek, it is not to be wondered at, since *error is ingrained in its nature*. (Or—since its origin is from Cathay.)

43. (جامی)

دیده روشن میشود از صورتِ زیبای تو . و هر کسی انکار این معنی کند روشن کنم

The eye lights up on seeing thy handsome face. If any one deny this, I will enlighten him. (Or—I will light up his eye.)

44. (جامی)

مرا فراقِ تو روزی هزار بار کُشد : فراقِ چون تو گلی این چنین هزار کُشد

Separation from thee kills me a thousand times a day. Separation from a rose like thee kills thus *the Bulbul*. (Or—a thousand.)

45. (جامی)

خنجر عشق خونِ من ریخت بخاکِ پایِ تو :

رایِ تو بود کشتم کشته شدم برایِ تو :

The dagger of love shed my blood at thy feet; thy purpose being to kill me, I was killed *for thy sake*. (Or—at thy desire.)

46. (جامی)

خواهم از دل بر کشم پیکانِ تو : لیک از دل بر نمی آید مرا

I should like to pluck out thine arrow from my heart, but *I have not the heart to do it*. (Or—it will not come out of my heart.)

47. (سلیمان ساوجی)

صبا چون شست زلفت بر کشاید : ز تبر چرخ بانگِ زه بر آید

When the breeze releases the bow-handle of thy locks, *the planet Mercury cries out 'Bravo!'* (Or—the twang of the bowstring is made by the arrow of heaven.)

48. (کمال خجندی)

دشوار کشد نقشِ دو ابرویِ تو نقاش : آسان نتواند کشیدن دو کان را

The painter can with difficulty draw a sketch of thy two eye-brows, for it is not easy to *draw two bows*.

[There is a pun in the English translation also.]

49. (کمال خجندی)

بما آن صوفی پیریده بینی : بغیر از عجز و مسکینی ندارد

نشاید جرمِ خود بینی بر او بست : که آن بیچاره خود بینی ندارد

To us the Soofi with the nose cut off looks but a poor miserable man. He should not be accused of self-conceit, as the poor fellow *has no self-conceit*. (Or—himself has no nose.)

50. (نظام استرابادی)

تیرت ز شستِ هجران بر جان و دل نشسته
گویم بر آرم از جانت اما نگویم از دل

Your arrow shot from the bow of separation has pierced my heart and soul. I say I shall pluck it out of the soul, but *I say not 'out of the heart.'* (Or—I say not so sincerely.)

51. (سیفی)

هر گه که چون عرابه شوم در پیش روان
غلطان شوم براه و نه چون گویم و نه چر

Whenever like a cart I follow her, I roll along the road, neither saying *how* nor *why*.

[چون and چر are also the creaking sounds made by the cart in motion. چون و چر as a contracted form of چرا is given in *بهارِ عجم*.]

52.

با رفیقِ غافل از حق کی ز الفت دم زنم
حقه گر حق حق نگوید بشکنم این حقه را

How can I speak of affinity with a companion not grateful to God? If the Hookkah were not to say 'God! God!' I would smash it. [حق حق which means 'God! God!' is the gurgling sound of the hookkah.]

The grammatical construction in the following two specimens is such that each verse has two meanings quite the opposite of each other.

53.

ای خواجه ضیا شود ز روی تو ظلم : یا طلعتِ تو سور ناپید ماتم

(1) O Khwâjah! thy face can turn darkness into light; and on thy appearance sorrow can be transformed into joyfulness.

(2) O Khwâjah! thy face can turn light into darkness, and a look at thy countenance turns joy into lamentation.

54.

موجود باقبالِ تو معدوم شود : وز سایه مهرِ تو ها بوم شود
آباد ز کردارِ تو گردد ویران : مسرور ز دیدارِ تو مغموم شود

(1) Your luck turns existence into non-existence; wherever your friendship casts its shadow, even the 'Homá' (the bird of good omen) is changed into an owl of ill omen; your deeds bring desolation to where there was prosperity; and on seeing you, a joyful man becomes mournful.

(2) Your good fortune brings non-existent things into existence; and under the shadow of your friendship, even an owl can be metamorphosed into a 'Homá.' Your deeds make a desolate place prosperous; and your face brings joy to a sorrowing man.

The following verses have two meanings, the opposite of each other, depending upon the way in which the verses are read, and the *cæsura* is placed.

55.

شخصی بمسجد آمد و گفتا خدا دو یست :: لعنت بر آن کسی که بگوید خدا یکست

(1) A person came into a mosque and said, "There are two Gods. Cursed be he who says there is only one God."

(2) A person came into a mosque and said, "Are there two Gods?" A curse on him who says so. There is only one God.

56.

The poet Sâib was held to be a *Shiah* by some and a *Sunni* by others. On being asked about his religious opinions, he wrote the following lines:—

از در شاه نجف روی مگردان صائب ::

هر که دورست ازین در بخدا نزدیکست ::

The word مگردان being written purposely without the diacritical point, the *Shiahs* read it as مگردان and, with the *cæsura* after دورست interpreted the lines thus:—

"O Sâib, turn not the face from the shrine of him who is buried at Najaf (*i.e.*, Ali). He who is further (from God) can, through this door, get nearer to Him."

The *Sunnis* read the word as نگردان, and with the *cæsura* after ازین در, made out the following meaning:—

"O Sâib, turn thy face from the shrine of him who is buried at Najaf. He who is further from this door is nearer to God."

[The above is from a *یاض*. But, evidently, for *Sunni* should be read *Khariji*.]

In the following specimens there are some Persian words used which can also be read as Hindi, thus producing a pun :

57. (امیر خسرو)

حجّام بسر بخوبی و رعنائی : چون آینه رخ نمود در زیبائی
گفتم صنّما که من یایم بر تو : فریاد بر آورد که نائی نائی

A barber's son was possessed of a graceful person, and showed a face shining like the mirror. I said to him, "O idol! I am coming to thy arms." He exclaimed, "Don't come! Don't come!" [Or, as Hindi: "(I am) a barber! a barber!"]

58.

شوخی هندویه بین کو دین برد از خاص و عام :
رام من هرگز نشد هر چند گفتم رام رام :

See how roguish is that Hindu girl who makes men forget their religion! She does not become the least fond of me, howsoever I greet her with the salutation 'Rām! Rām'. [Or—I say to her '(Be thou my) pet! (Be thou my) pet!']

59. (امیر خسرو)

رفتم بتمشای کنار جوئی : دیدم بلب آب زنِ هندوئی
گفتم صنّما بهای زلفت چه بود : فریاد بر آورد که دُر دُر موئی

✓ I went sight-seeing to the banks of a river, and I saw there a Hindu woman sitting. I said to her: "Sweetheart! What is the price of thy ringlets?" She cried out: "Every hair a pearl's worth!"

[The underlined Persian words if taken as Hindi, mean "Away! away! you villain!"]

60. (امیر خسرو)

گفتم که درین خانه مامون تو باشم : گفتا که درین خانه بلائی ست ممانی

I said, "I should like to live in your secure house." (Or—the house of your maternal uncle.) He said, "In this house is a source of trouble; do not stay." (Or—"in this house the aunt is a shrew.")

61.

حرفی بجا ز کس نشنیدم بملک هند : غیر از همین که گفت بمطرب بجا بجا

In the country of India I never heard a word in its proper place, except when they said to the musician—"proper, proper." [The underlined words, in Hindi mean "*strike up a tune, strike up a tune!*"]

62. (عبدالجلیل)

به سر سبزیست برگب یان نکو فال : زبان من بود در وصف آن لال

The betel-leaf is considered auspicious on account of its greenness; my tongue is dumb in its praise.

[*سر سبزی* which literally means 'greenness of head,' also means 'prosperity.' *لال* in Hindi means 'red,' the colour assumed by the tongue when the betel-leaf roll is chewed.]

63. (امیر خسرو)

دی تنبولی یسر عیاری می کرد : یک یک بدکان برگ شماری می کرد
او یان بخلق می سپرد و همه خلق : دریش دکانش جان سپاری می کرد

Yesterday the *Tamboli* boy showed cleverness, when, in his shop, he counted the betel-leaves one by one. He distributed the betel-leaves to the people, and the people all, in front of his shop dedicated their lives to him.

[A *Tamboli* is the seller of *pán* or betel-leaves. Both are Hindi words. *سپاری* is also Hindi for betel-nut. *عیاری* for *سپاری* is allowable in Hindustani.]

In the following specimens, if all the words are read as Persian they make good sense, but the underlined words are also Hindi, and as such are translations of some of the preceding Persian words.

64. (امیر خسرو)

پنبه دهنا چه خوب روئی : وی چه ذقنا کدام کوئی
از هر طرفی ترا بجستم : سوزن یلکا کدام سوئی

O thou with lips soft like cotton-wool, how beautiful thou art!
O thou with the chin-pit like a well, in what street dost thou dwell? I have been seeking thee in every direction. O thou with needle-like eyelashes! In what direction art thou?

[*روئی* and *سوئی* if read as Hindi are the exact equivalents of the Persian words *پنبه* and *سوزن* occurring in the respective lines.]

65. (امیر خسرو)

داریم آرزو که حکایت کنیم بات : لاله غلام روی تو صد برگ زیر یات
چون برهن بدید رخ خوبت ای صنم : ز تار را گسست و انکد زد بروی لات

We have a yearning to converse with thee. The tulip is a slave of thy face, and the rose of a hundred leaves is under thy feet. O my idol, when the Brahmin saw thy beautiful face, he tore off his sacred girdle, and kicked the idol *Lât*.

[H. بات = P. حکایت] [H. یات = P. برگ] [H. لات = P. انکد]

66. (امیر خسرو)

ای شوخ غم تو کشت مارا : و ز هجر تو سوختیم جارا
در پیش نگاه آتشینت : خاصیت زیق است یارا
چون زلف تو عنبرین نباشد : جویند اگر تمام سارا

O charmer, your love has killed us, and owing to separation from thee we have burnt our abode. Before thy fiery glance the foot acquires the characteristics of quicksilver. No amber can be found to match thy ringlets, even if the whole of Sara (the place where it abounds) be searched for it.

[H. یارا = P. زیق] [H. جارا = P. سوخت] [H. مارا = P. کشت]
[H. تار = P. سارا]

67.

A group of Puns, called اشتراک

کشتی و عمر هر دو در گذر اند : شاهد و زرگر این دو سیمبر اند
شجره و دزد هر دو بردارند : کتف و سالار هر دو سردارند
شاعر و حاکم اهل دیوانند : بنده و خواجه زیر فرمانند
سرو و آزاده هر دو بی بارند : رشته و قیر هر دو با تارند
آتش و زلف یار در تابند : جوی و شمشیر هر دو با آبند

The two meanings of the underlined expressions are as under:

- در گذر (1) In the ferry; (2) in a state of passing.
سیمبر (1) Having silver breast; (2) silver-stealer.
بردار (1) Bearing fruit; (2) on the gallows.

- سردار (1) Bearing the head; (2) chief.
 دیوان (1) A book of odes; (2) the hall of justice.
 زیر فرمانند (1) Are under orders.
 زیر فرمانند (2) live under pomp.
 بی بار (1) Without fruit; (2) without load or care.
 تار (1) Thread; (2) dark or black.
 در تاب (1) Blazing; (2) twisted.
 آب (1) Water; (2) sheen, sharpness of edge.

A sheaf of puns from امیر خسرو depending on the letters used in a word:—

68.

اقبال را بقا نبود دل در او میند : عمری که بر غرور گذاری هبا بود
 ورنیست باورت زمن این نکته شریف : اقبال را چو قلب کنی لا بقا بود

Fortune has no permanency; do not be in love with it. The life that you live in pride of wealth is so much life wasted. If you do not believe what I have said, just read the word اقبال (*i.e.*, fortune) backwards, and it becomes لا بقا (*i.e.*, having no permanency).

69. (امیر خسرو)

هر جا که صلا بر سر حلوا باشد : نزدیک من و همه همانست صلاح

(1) Wherever there is invitation to partake of *Halwa*, to me and to all men that appears the proper course.

(2) صلا (invitation) placed on the سر حلوا (the first letter of حلوا *i.e.* ح) makes صلاح (proper course).

70. (امیر خسرو)

The following puns, of the same nature as the above, are in prose:—

(a) در میان لفظِ صراحی نیز راح است

(b) سرود بی رود تمام نباشد

(c) دشمن را تا دو نیم نکنند از من جدا نمی شود

(d) حرکاتِ عَلمِ ملکی مبنی است بر فتح

(e) بازو باید که با کار باشد

(f) هرگز عوام را از وام خالی نیایی

(g) اعور يك عين دارد و بمعنی نیز واحد العين است

(h) از دمِ درستِ بزرگان و کریم بی کم ایشان نیکخواهان را درم موجود است

(i) هیاهات کز اسلام همین اسم می بینم باقی در میان لا

- (a) Wine (راح) is even in the word for flask صراحی.
- (b) Music (سرود) cannot be complete without the harp (رون).
- (c) The enemy (دشمن) unless divided into two (دش من) cannot be separated from me (من).
- (d) (1) The movements of the flag of state are based on victory.
(2) The vowel signs (حرکات) in the word علم (flag) are all فتح (i.e., those pronounced like 'a').
- (e) (1) The arm should always be working.
(2) The arm co-operates with the hand.
- (f) Ordinary people (عوام) are not without debt (وام).
- (g) A one-eyed man (اعور) has one eye (عين and the letter غ).
- (h) (1) Money (درم) becomes available through the right words (دم درست) of great men and their undecreasing generosity (کرم بی کم).
(2) دم درست = the whole word دم.
کرم بی کم = the word کرم without the letters forming د i.e., the letter ک.
This letter د coming between دم forms درم.
- (i) Of Islam nothing but the name (اسم) remains, and as to the inside there is nothing (لا).
[لا inserted between اسم makes اسلام.]

The following three couplets read the same backwards as forwards:

71. (نطنزی)

ز نطنز آمد رختِ خردِ ما ز نطنز : ز نطنزم ز نطنزم ز نطنز

From Natanz has come the equipment of our intellect. I am from Natanz, I am from Natanz, I am from Natanz, from Natanz.

72. (نطنزی)

یا خسرو نو نورِ سخای : یاری ده ما مهدی رای

O new King, who art the lustre of generosity, giver of help to us and a Mehdi in judgment!

73.

داد ما را درد و درد آرام داد به دارم آرامی و وی ما را مراد

She gave us pain, and the pain gave ease. I have tranquillity and she is the object of our desire.

In the following couplet the word S occurs frequently with different meanings:—

74.

در آن در که که که که و که که آمد که .:

مشو ایمن اگر هستی ز قهر و لطف او آگه .:

The first verse will be more clearly understood by placing the vowel points and separating the letters, thus :—

در آن درگاه که که که و که که آمد که

In that royal Court where oftentimes an inferior is esteemed as dung, and at other times even a mountain is held as straw, do not feel thyself secure, if thou knowest well the effects of the anger and of the clemency of the king.

75.

زبان گر جای خود مانند زبان است : و گر يك نقطه افزاید زبان است

As long as the tongue is in its proper place, it is a tongue, *but if it is extended even a point further*, (i.e., if it indulges in too much talk) *it is a harmful thing*. [Or—If a single point is added to the Persian word *zabân* (i.e., tongue) it becomes *ziyân* (i.e., harm).]

76. (نعمت خان عالی)

The Times are out of joint.

در این ملک خراب امروز کس را نیست سامانی
چو گنج افتاده اند اهل هنر در گنج ویرانی
بسر حدی رسیده خلق را افلاس و ناداری
که معنی هم ندارد این زمان حرف سخندانانی
سپاهی هم میبندان قناعت می کنند جولان
ز شمشیر و سیر دارد دم آبی لب نانی

- طیب از علم طب در یاد می دارد همین معنی :
- نباشد خوبتر از شربت دینار درمانی :
- منجم را نشد غیر از فلاکت از فلک حاصل :
- ز ضعفِ جوع پیسند قرص مه را گِردۀ نانی :
- ز فکرِ مفلسی رمال از بس ریش خود کنده :
- نوده باد دستی لجِه اش را شکل لجانی :
- نباشد آن قدر سرمایه هم جراح مسکین را :
- که بر زخمِ دلِ خود سرنگون سازد نمکدانی :
- چو طفلِ ننی سوار از بهرِ روزی می دود کاتب :
- ز کلکِ خود کمیتی دارد و از صفحه میدانی :
- شده صباغ از رنگی برنگی هر دم از خجلت :
- که نعمت های الوان رفت و محتاجم یک نانی :
- نمانده پیش شمّاعی بهای رشته شمعی :
- مگر از عشق بازان وام گیرد رشته جانی :
- ندارد باغبان مشتِ زری چون غنچه دلتنگ :
- برنگِ گل ازین غم چاک زد هر دم گریانی :
- رسد با جان سیاری کارِ تنبولی ز بی برگی :
- برای سرخروئی چون نه دارد بیره پانی :
- تنور آسا بخاکستر نشیند نانبا زین غم :
- که از افتادنِ نان بر سرش افتاده تاوانی :
- نه تقدی هست و نی جنسی ولی دلالِ بازاری :
- برای خود فروشی وا کنند هر روز دکانی :
- دروگر آره را از خانه خود راند از خست :
- مگر بر ریزۀ خوانش نموده تیز دندانی :
- ز خای می یزد سودا نمی یابد چو باورچی :
- برنج و روغن و سیر و پیاز و مرغ و حلوانی :

In this ruined country nowadays none is a man of means, and men of skill lie hid like treasure in a desolate corner.

The people have reached such a pitch of poverty and insolvency, that even the words of poets show dearth—the dearth of sense!

The soldier too has to canter only in the field of contentment; and for a crust of bread and a draught of water he has to look to his shield, (round like bread), and his sword (which possesses 'water' or sheen).

The physician can recollect only this maxim of therapeutics, that there is no remedy better than a dose of gold.

The astrologer receives from the revolving heavens nothing but adversity, and the weakness of starvation makes him mistake the orb of the moon for a loaf of bread.

The geomancer, on account of the worries of poverty, plucks his beard, for empty-handedness makes him see therein the auspicious geomantic figure*.

The poor surgeon has not even as much as would suffice for applying salt to the wound of his heart.

The writer, like a child bestriding a reed, has to trot about for his livelihood, making his pen the horse, and the paper the field.

The dyer *changes colour* every moment, from shame at the fading away of the rosy prospect of banquets, and his being in need of a crust of bread.

The candle maker has not the wherewithal to buy a single candle-wick, and is thinking of borrowing from the lovers their *thread of life*.

The gardener is not possessed of even a handful of gold like the *close-hearted* rose bud†, and grief on this account makes him blush like the rose, and tear his collar.

Through indigence the betel-leaf seller is on the point of giving up the ghost, since he has not a single roll of betel-leaf to *keep him in countenance*.‡

* لحيه is a beard, and لحيان is a person having a long beard. The latter is also the name given in geomancy (رمل) to the figure $\begin{smallmatrix} \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \end{smallmatrix}$ which is regarded as very auspicious, being the sign of the planet Jupiter. Hence the pun.

† The gold is here an allusion to the golden stamens. The allusion to the close-heartedness of the bud and the torn collar of the rose is evident.

‡ There are several puns here. سیاری is also Hindi for the *betel-nut*. بی زرگی (indigence) also means 'being without a leaf,' i.e., of 'pān' in this case).

سرخروئی is honour, and also 'red mouth' caused by the chewing of the 'pān' چون نه read as Hindi means *chunam*, which forms one of the ingredients of the roll of betel leaf, and combined with the catechu produces the red colour.

The baker has, like the oven, to *sit in ashes*, from sorrow at the thought that the *fall* in (the weight of) bread makes penalty *fall* on his head.

The broker of the market-place has neither cash nor substance, and yet he opens his shop every day for *self-advertisement*.*

Meanness makes the carpenter drive the saw out of his house, as it *shows sharp teeth* [voracity] for the *leavings* of his table.

The cook has to *make a mess of things*,† as he cannot get rice and butter, and onion and garlic, and fowl and kid.

— *** —

The above lines in which there are several professions and trades grouped together, with puns here and there, remind us of Thomas Hood, whose poem "My son and heir" is a rich store-house of puns on the various professions. A few lines are given below:—

My mother bids me *bind my heir*,
But not the trade where I should bind.
To place a boy—the how and where—
It is the plague of *parent kind*.

. . .

A statesman James can never be ;
A tailor? there I only learn
His chief concern is cloth, and he
Is always *cutting his concern*.

. . .

A shop for pot and pan and cup,
Such *brittle stock* I can't advise ;
A builder running houses up?
His gains are *stories*—may be lies!

. . .

A paper maker? *come he must*
To rags before he sells a sheet.
A miller?—All his toil is just
To make a meal he does not eat.

* Pun on خود فروشی which literally means 'sale of one's self.'

† سودا بختن "to cook an idea" is used for framing a scheme, or forming an aspiration. سودای خام بختن "cooking a raw idea" is to make a miscalculation or to have vain aspirations.

77. On Chess.

Lines by the Author. (مهر نوشیروان کوکا)

[Play on words underlined.]

یا یار شطرنج بازی کنیم : بر این عرصه گردن درازی کنیم
 زهی عرصه فرشِ دورنگی بر آن : گروه سیاهانِ جنگی بر آن
 دولشکر ز روم و ز زنگ آمدند : در این معرکه بهر جنگ آمده
 نه دارند تیر و نه تیغ و سنان : و زین تیزتر بشنو این داستان
 که هریک سیه گرچه خانه دراست : همانا بیدان همه لشکر است
 همه کس گه رزم جنبان بوند : چو شد آشتی جمله بی جان بوند
 بین یلتن را درین رزمگاه : بر اسپ و جوشان میان سپاه
 درین جا هجوم دلیران بود : ولی چیره دستی بدستان بود
 درین رزم تیمور را نیست جای : ولی شاه رخ گشته معجز نای
 نشاید که فرزین و شاه و سوار : پیاده شوند اندر این کارزار
 پیاده تواند که فرزین بشود : سپه را همه کز و فر زین شود
 یکی زین دولشکر بگیر و بیای : بیدان هنرهای خویش آزمای
 بیفتد که تو شاه ماتم کنی : و یا بر سر شاه ماتم کنی
 پس بازی بینی بسی واقعات : نشاید پیرشانی دل زلمات
 تفکر کن اول بسی و بیاز : دو اسپ ارچه داری دو اسپ متاز
 اگر مهره گم کنی دروغا : نه پیچید باید چو ماری ترا
 چو گم گشت مهره چه غم کردنت : که نیست آخر آن مهره گردنت
 شہت را اگر شہ بگویند کسی : نشاید که رنجید دل تو بسی
 چه جای غم است از شہت کشت خورد : که لازم بود انس را کشت خورد
 تو بازی اگر باختی رخ متاب : همان چون تو در باختی رخ متاب
 چو بهره نباشد ترا دست برد : الا تاهه بگذاری از دست برد
 چو از دست شد بازیت باز باز : کن اصرار گردد در بسته باز

Come, friend, let us play chess; let us stretch our necks over this battle-field.

A wonderful arena this, on which is a two-coloured carpet, and on which are troops of brave warriors!

Two armies have come hither, one from Rome and the other from Zanzibar, (*i.e.*, one white and the other black), for the sake of engaging in battle.

No arrows have they, nor sword or lance. And, listen to what is more wonderful still—

Viz: that though every warrior is in his house¹, the whole army is at the very same time in the battle-field!

At the time of fight these people are active, but at the time of peace the whole lot of them is lifeless!

See, there is Rustom² in the battle-field, by the side of his horse,³ and raging in the midst of warriors.

In this place brave men are engaged in assault, but it is with Zâl⁴ that victory rests.

In this warfare Taimûr has no part, but (his son) *Shah-Rukh*⁵ displays wonders here.

In this battle it is not allowable for the minister, the king, or the knight *to dismount*. [Or *to become a pawn*.]

But the foot-soldier can become a minister, and the army acquires much distinction thereby.

Come, take charge of one of these two armies, and display your tactics on the battle-ground.

1. خانه 'house,' means also 'a square of the chess-board.'

2. پیلتن 'elephant-bodied,' was the title of Rustom. 'Elephant' is the name of a piece, the '*Bishop*' in the English game.

3. اسب 'horse' is a chess-piece of that name, the '*Knight*' in the English game.

4. دستان was the title of Rustom's father, Zâl; the word also means [*'stratagem' or 'artifice.'*]

5. شاه رخ (*Shah-Rukh*), was the fourth son of Taimûr (Tamer-lane), and the most renowned of the Taimurian dynasty. He was so named, because his birth was announced to Taimûr at a time when he had just given a *shah-ruk* (check) to his opponent, in a game of chess. *Shah-ruk* is a check in which the King (*shâh*) and the Rook (*ruk*) are simultaneously attacked; and this, generally, means the loss of the Rook. As, in the mediæval game, the Rook was the most powerful piece on the board, the check involving the loss of this piece was much dreaded.

It may be that you will checkmate me, or that you will have to wail over the head of your king.

In this game you will meet with many incidents; and distress of heart *because of the mate* is not fitting.] [Or, *to you because of us* is not fitting.]

First think well and then play: though you have *two horses* do not move *hurriedly*.

If you lose a piece⁶ in this fight, you need not writhe like a snake. Why should you fret, if a piece be less? After all, it is not the atlas-bone⁷ of your neck.

If one *gives check to your king*, [or—if one *calls your king a king*], you should not be troubled at heart over it.

What occasion is there for sorrow if your king received a *check (kisht)*? For it is but fitting that human beings *should receive a check*, [or—*should eat the produce of the field*⁸.]

If you *lose the game do not turn away the face*; likewise when you *lose a Rook do not writhe*.

If victory falls not to your lot, take care, let not the *Burd*⁹ slip from your hand.

If your game is gone play again; for a locked door can be opened by perseverance.

78. (مهر نوشیروان کوکا)

In wonderland.

In the following lines¹⁰ by the author, Persian and English words having the same sound are combined, forming a kind of artifice (صنعت) called ملحق. Read as Persian altogether the lines give an idea of a very queer state of affairs. It is only when the underlined words are taken as *English* words that the real meaning becomes apparent.

In the translation the first column gives the former meaning, and the second the latter.

6. مهر 'Mohrah' is 'a chess-piece,' as well as 'the snake-stone.'

7. 'Mohrah,' when used with *gardan*, 'neck,' means 'the atlas-bone.'

8. کشت (*Kisht*) in chess, signifies 'a check,' especially that given by a Knight. *Kisht* also means 'seed,' or 'that which is sown,' or 'a sown field.'

9. برد 'Burd' is a kind of half-victory at chess, when the opponent has no piece left but the king, and at the time of the last capture of his piece he had not been checkmated. Some players consider this a drawn game. *Burd* is not recognised in English chess.

10. Written in 1909 for the *Dastur Hoshang Memorial Volume*, and subsequently revised.

- شخصی از ایران بلندن شد روان : هم در آن جا ماند چندی آن جوان 1
 چوت زبانِ اهل آنجا یاد کرد : بیش یاری زان زبان فریاد کرد 2
 گفت کینجا مور را گفتار هست : اسپ چابک بر سر هر کار هست 3
 گاو بر هر طرف می باشد چران : ملک می بخشد بجهله مردمان 4
 گلبن اینجا بد نما در گلشن است : زن چو خامش گشت آنکه دم زنت 5
 شادمان وقت سر هر کس بود : عاشقان را ذوق هستی بس بود 6
باس داران را بود هر جای بار : بار بر را مو تراشی گشت کار 7
 عاقلانرا گوش بر سر من بود : وزن ده کس کمتر از یک تن بود 8
 فارس اینجا می توان دیدن عیان : روم هم پیدا است اندر هر مکان 9
 می گساران را بود با بار کار : مرد پیل افگن بود نارنج خوار 10
 می فروش از رم کند ماند بجا : تیر زن بر بط زند باشد روا 11
لنگ باید دم بدم باشد روان : در تکلم تنگ می گردد جهان 12
کف زند خیاط ما بر آستین : شرط کردن عادتش دان همچنین 13
 مرد و زن را جامه باشد بر زیم : هم دلاور را بود در خانه بیم 14
 بیشه ور را طول می آید بکار : نردبان بی رنگ ناید در شمار 15
لاف کان خیزد ز فن خرم دلیست : با کسی گفتن نشاید سی و بیست 16
 چوت که از بزم طرب خیزد سرود : بی گمان مر مر شود آن گاه رود 17
 از دهان توپ زاید بوم و پیل : خوش بود سر بر زبان در قال و قیل 18
 گر طیبی مرد را بخشد شفا : روت کوبد تا کزات سازد دوا 19
 گر کسی با تو بگوید سینه پیچ : آن سوال از میوه دان بیش هیچ 20
 هم مدار از کارد اندر دست باک : نیست آن جز 'رقعه' در زیر خاک 21
 چون بگور اندر سپید پست شد : می توان گفتن کان در دست شد 22
 وقت باران یول یابی جا بجا : رگ 'ز تن کن دور کاخر شد شتا 23
 گر بخوایم یار را دعوت کنم : پس سخن دو کم بباید گفتن 24
 نیم پخته گوشت اندر دب بود : دان که هر چیز از در خوردن بود 25
 گرسنه را میل گشته آشنا : مرد شد بی کام در رنج و عشا 26
 پاده شد انگور چون وی گشت مست : تیغ را صیقل نکردی مست رست 27

(1) A youth from Persia went to London, and lived there for some time.

(2) When he learnt the language of the people there, he complained about it to a friend.

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| (3) Said he: Here the ant is endowed with speech, and the active horse is at the head of affairs. | (3) Said he: Here the <i>Moor</i> can talk, and the active horse is at the head of every <i>car</i> . |
| (4) The cow grazes in every direction, and bestows property on all men! | (4) The cow grazes on every <i>turf</i> , and gives <i>milk</i> to all men. |
| (5) Here the rose-bush is an ugly sight in the parterre! When a woman becomes silent she boasts! | (5) Here the rose-bush in the parterre displays <i>buds</i> . When a woman becomes silent she is a <i>dumb</i> woman. |
| (6) At the time of gossiping every one is glad. To lovers the joy of being alive is enough. | (6) In <i>summer</i> every one is glad. To lovers the joy of existence is a <i>buss</i> . |
| (7) Those who keep vigils gain admittance everywhere. The porter has taken to hair-cutting! | (7) Those who hold a <i>pass</i> can get admittance everywhere. The occupation of a <i>barber</i> is hair-cutting. |
| (8) Wise men have on the head ears (weighing) one maund! The weight of ten persons is less than that of one individual! | (8) Wise men listen to <i>sermons</i> . The weight of ten persons is less than a <i>ton</i> . |
| (9) One can plainly see Fars (even) here; and Rome also is visible in every house! | (9) A <i>farce</i> can be easily witnessed here. In every building is to be seen a <i>room</i> . |
| (10) Wine-drinkers have to do with loads! The orange-eater is an overthrower of elephants! | (10) Wine-drinkers have to do with the <i>bar</i> . The eater of oranges throws away the <i>peel</i> . |
| (11) A wine-seller, even if he takes to flight, remains in the same place! If an archer plays on the harp, it is proper! | (11) A wine-seller, if he make <i>rum</i> , may remain in the same place. If an archer hit the <i>butt</i> , it is proper. |

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| <p>(12) A lame man ought to be in motion every moment! In conversation the world becomes narrow, (<i>i.e.</i>, one feels miserable!)</p> <p>(13) Our tailor slaps the sleeve; and making terms is likewise a habit of his!</p> <p>(14) Men and women have garments full of silver. Even brave men feel afraid in the house!</p> <p>(15) To an artisan length is of use. A ladder unpainted is of no account.</p> <p>(16) Boasting due to knowledge of science is merry-heartedness. One should never say to another—'thirty and twenty'!</p> <p>(17) When in a festive assembly music is played, no doubt the river becomes marble at the time!</p> <p>(18) From the mouth of the cannon are born the owl and the elephant! In discussion it is nice to have the head on the tongue.</p> <p>(19) When a physician cures a man, he pounds thy face to make medicine thereof!</p> <p>(20) If a person say to thee, 'Twist thy bosom,' know that it is nothing more than a query about a fruit!</p> <p>(21) Also, thou needs not be afraid of a knife in the hand; it is nothing but a piece of paper beneath the dust!</p> | <p>(12) The <i>lung</i> ought to be in motion with every breath. In conversation the <i>tongue</i> comes into motion.</p> <p>(13) Our tailor applies the <i>cuffs</i> to the sleeves; and <i>shirt</i>-making is his practice.</p> <p>(14) Men and women have garments full of <i>seams</i>. Even a brave man has a <i>beam</i> in his house.</p> <p>(15) To an artisan a <i>tool</i> is of use. A ladder without <i>rungs</i> is of no account.</p> <p>(16) A <i>laugh</i> which arises from <i>fun</i> is merry-heartedness. One should never say to another—'See O Beast.'</p> <p>(17) When in a festive assembly music is played, no doubt a <i>murmur</i> at the time would be <i>rude</i>!</p> <p>(18) From the mouth of the cannon issue the <i>boom</i> and the <i>peal</i>. In discussion it is nice to have '<i>Sir</i>' on the tongue.</p> <p>(19) When a physician cures a man, he pounds a <i>root</i> to make medicine thereof.</p> <p>(20) If a person say to thee, '<i>Seen a peach?</i>' know that it is nothing more than a query about a fruit.</p> <p>(21) Also, thou needst not be afraid of a <i>card under dust</i>; it is nothing but a piece of paper under the dust.</p> |
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| <p>(22) When the general of the army is laid low in the grave, it may be said that he passed off <i>bow-in-hand</i>!</p> | <p>(22) When the general of an army is laid low in the grave, one may say that the <i>Commander</i> has become <i>dust</i>.</p> |
| <p>(23) When it is raining you will find money everywhere! When the winter is over remove the veins from the body!</p> | <p>(23) When it is raining you will find <i>pools</i> (of water) everywhere. When the winter is over take off the <i>rug</i> from the body.</p> |
| <p>(24) If I want to invite a friend, I must say two words less!</p> | <p>(24) If I want to invite a friend I must use the words—'<i>Do come</i>.'</p> |
| <p>(25) Half-cooked meat is to be found in the wine-jar. All sorts of things are fit for food.</p> | <p>(25) Half-cooked meat is <i>underdone</i>. Every kind of <i>cheese</i> is to be eaten.</p> |
| <p>(26) To a hungry man a skewer is a friend. Man becomes listless when in trouble.</p> | <p>(26) To a hungry man a <i>meal</i> is a friend. Man <i>should be calm</i> under trouble.</p> |
| <p>(27) Grapes, when they become intoxicated, become wine! As you polished not the sword, the inebriate escaped!</p> | <p>(27) Grapes become wine when they become <i>must</i>.[*] If you polish not the sword it <i>must rust</i>.</p> |
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* Juice pressed from the grape but not fermented.

RIDDLES. معما

Under this head I have put together what are known as معما, in which the name of a person or a thing is to be found out from the verses by a manipulation of words or letters, as is best exemplified in the following well-known English riddle on an 'onion'.

"Charge, Chester, charge : on, Stanley, on!"

Were the last words of Marmion.

Had I but been in Stanley's place,

When Marmion urged him to the chase,

A word you then would all espy.

That brings a tear to every eye.

on—I—on—Onion.

To solve these kinds of riddles, a knowledge of Persian is essential. Translation, being no help whatsoever to one unacquainted with the language, I have omitted, merely adding a few notes here and there to elucidate the meaning.

It will be useful to remember that in معما, the first letter is generally indicated by any one of the following words:—

اول - ابتدا - کلاه - افسر - تاج - لب - سر
وسط - میان - مغز - مرکز - دل
بن - انجام - پایان - حد - دامن - قدم - پا

For the extreme letters the words پوست and جامه are sometimes used, and for the middle letters مغز.

The words گوهر or دانه or خال refer to the diacritical points; and the words نقش or صورت indicate letters similar in form.

If the order of the letters in a word is reversed, it is indicated by such words as عکس - قلب - دل and بازگشت (دل — Ar. قلب which also means 'the reverse').

The letter م is called دهان شکل; س is س; and ن is شکل. ابرو or شکل هلال.

The word زلف may indicate the letter ج or ل or د, while the word سرو or قد or علم may point to the letter ا.

The word چشم indicates ع and sometimes ص.

The word شرف occurring in many of the riddles is the *nom-de-plume* of their author, شرف الدین علی یزدی, who holds the foremost rank among the composers of such riddles.

The riddles are here arranged in the alphabetical order of the Answers.

1.

تا شرف دل برگرفت از ابرویش در طری آن .
 محو شد ز آغاز و انجام دو عالم نقشِ غم .

Answer—{ابوالمعالی} From ابروی remove the دل i.e., ر which leaves ابوی. Now نقشِ غم is غم which remove from the beginning and end of عالم عالم and المعال is left. This joined to the previous remainder makes ابوالمعالی.

2.

صبحا مرد چو بی صبر یا بی از غم یار .
 بنام دوست صبحی کن و شراب یار

Answer—{احمد} From the words صبحا مرد take away the letters forming صبر.

3.

چون ساربان همی گفت احوالِ مهدِ آن ماه .
 واله بسوخت اما خیر است حمدِ اله

Answer—{احمد} From مهد احوال remove واله.

4.

کردی آشفته و شیدا همه شیدا یا نرا .
 ساختی بی سرو یا بی سرو بی پایان را

Answer—{اختیار} ساختی is ساختی بی سرو and بی پایان is بی پایان without the last letter, is ر .

5.

گر در وسطِ فصلِ شتاز ابرِ عطایت .
 یک قطره چکد سرو بر آید ز کنتارش

Answer—{افضل} Place a قطره, or point, on the middle of فصل, and place before it سرو i.e., the letter ا.

6.

احسانِ بی پایانِ اوگر عکس بر قاف افکند .
 سیرغ را همچون شرف در دام الطاف افکند

Answer—{اسحاق} عکس is احسا the عکس of which is اسحق, which place on ق .

7.

ما در دلیر خویش نامِ دلبرِ دانیم .
 و ز بیم و زبانِ خلق پنهان خوانیم

Answer—{امام} ما within the reverse of itself.

8.

لعل بیدل شد ازان هر دو لب لعل شرف :
 گوهر نام ترا در نظم چون سازد صدف :

Answer—امام } are the two ل which written together are لام لام from which remove لعل بیدل i.e., ل.

9.

آنچه ز آئینه ام توقع بود : آب در عکسِ خویشتن بنمود

Answer—امام } in Arabic, and its عکس is ام. Place ما in the middle of ام.

10.

از میان برخیز ای سرو روان : جای تو این نیست بالاتر نشین

Answer—امین } Remove the سرو, or the letter ا, from the word میان, and place it at the top.

11.

گر جهان یر شود از سرو قد و لاله عذار :
 زان میان سرو تو خواهم که در آرم بکنار :

Answer—امین } From میان take the سرو, i.e., the letter ا, and place it on the کنار i.e., the beginning.

12.

نام او می جستم و گم شد دل من تا کجاست :
 بوی دل گر بشنوم یا بم ز نام او نشان :

Answer—ایوب } نام is which, disappearing from نام, leaves ا. بوی دل is یوب.

13.

بازی که بود بر سر دست تو چو شاهی :
 شاید که شرف طعمه دهد از دل ریشش :

Answer—بایزید } and بازی place دد on which سر دست is. ی. i.e., دل ریش insert.

14.

عاجزند از درك نامش خاص و عام : ور بقا باشد شرف قادر شود

Answer—بدر } i.e., قادر شود is قا is changed into در in the word بقا.

15.

بامیدِ کامی که آید بکف : بسی نقش بر دل نگارد شرف

Answer—{بشیر} بشی is بسی نقش, which place on the heart of
د. i.e., شرف

16.

بتیغ از می کشی شاید ولی پیوند را مگسل :

بلا بردل خوش است اما سرِ دوری ندارد دل :

Answer—{بالال} د. is سرِ دوری Place بلا on دل deprived of د.

17.

ما ره برای دوست بردیم بنام : در پیشِ سرای باز گشتیم تمام

Answer—{بهرام} Begin to write the words برای and just
before writing the word سرای pause and turn back, as indicated by
the words پیشِ سرای باز گشتیم .

So the letters written ما ره ب inverted, become بهرام .

18.

دوشینه شرفِ نامِ شریف تو بیان کرد : بهرِ منِ دلسوخته بود آنچه عیان کرد

Answer—{بهرمن} بهرِ منِ دل سوخته i.e., the word with
the heart (i.e., the letter د) burnt out.

19.

جعلِ یا شکسته را دیدم : فرسِ دمِ بریده راست سوار

Answer—{جعفر} فر. is فرسِ دمِ بریده and دجع is جعل یا شکسته

20.

گر رود آبِ عرب در آبِ هند : نامِ یارم آن زمان پیدا شود

Answer—{جال} The Hindi word for water is جل and the
Arabic word is ما .

21.

چون دید شرفِ کرشمه ساقی ما : از جامِ تهی ز پا در آمد شیدا

Answer—{جمشید} جم is جامِ تهی and شیدا which has lost its
'foot' is شیدا .

22.

در کعبهٔ وصالت اگر می دهند بار : ارکان حج تمام کن و شکر حق گذار

Answer—حاجی محمد } *i.e.*, that of which حج is made, are the letters ح and ج, which when written with their full names are محمد is شکر حق ; حاجیم.

23.

از چشم من چو ریخت هراں گوهری که بود :

در چشم قطره بار ز دریا دری کشود :

Answer—حسام } دریا in which insert چشم is قطره بار without دری, *i.e.*, ا.

24.

حریم چشم مرا سروت از بیار آید : کند تار هراں گوهری که دارد چشم

Answer—حسام } *ا* is سروت, which place in the midst of چشم, removing the points (گوهر).

25.

نی سحر چون گشت نالان راز او گردد نهان :

وقت نازک بود دروی سر بی حد شد عیان :

Answer—حسین } In this riddle the answer can be derived from either verse, thus:—Take the word نی سحر and reverse it, as indicated by the word گشت. This makes ر حسین. Now راز او is to be read separately راز او, so that راز او گردد نهان will mean 'from it *i.e.*, the letter ر, is to be hidden', leaving حسین.

In the second verse وقت نازک is what is called in Arabic حین, in which bring سر بی حد *i.e.*, س.

26.

در می اگر گویند حد باید زدن شرعست و دین :

عکس آن گوید شرف گویا معنی باشد این :

Answer—حمید } The opposite of حد باید زدن is *i.e.*, place می inside of حد, and it becomes حمید,

27.

رایتِ وصفِ رفیع چون براندازد شرف

از حیا دارا بیندازد علمها را همه

{Answer—حیدر} From the words حیا دارا remove the 'flag-staffs,' i.e., the three ا.

28.

خرابی را گرت باشد ضرورت : ورت نبود ز بهر نام کن یاد

{Answer—خضر} خرابی را i.e., خرا without خ is خ, and ضرورت without ورت is ضر.

29.

صورتِ حالی که دور از روی او دارد شرف

لال باشد ابله و ابکم خرد در وصفِ آن

Tr.—The intellect is deaf, dumb, and stupid, in describing the condition that Sharaf is in, owing to his not being able to see her face.

{Answer—خلیل الله} صورتِ حالی is صورتِ خالی which ought to be remote form او روی i.e., ا, leaving خلی. Add to this لال and ابله which makes خلیلا لال. Now ابکم باشد is ابکم باشد i.e., اب is to be subtracted from the result, leaving خلیل الله.

30.

لبِ ساقی و لطفِ بی حد او : گر بود گو مباش می بیات

{Answer—سلطان} لبِ ساقی is لب, and لطفِ بی حد is لطف; and ان is without می.

31.

تشنه ایم و جهان پر آب حیات : با سبوی تهی کنارِ فراط

{Answer—سیف} سبوی تهی i.e., the word سبوی with the inside taken out is سی, and کنارِ فراط is ف.

32.

اگر ز شمعِ جمالِ تو دیده بر گیرم : سرِ ستانِ تو بادا بجای آن دیده

{Answer—شمس} دیده is in Arabic عین, and here the letter ع. Remove ع from شمع, and substitute سرِ ستان i.e., س.

33.

از نیمه مه ولی تمامش در شب بطلب نشان نامش

{Answer—شهاب} Half of مه is ه—its complete form is ها, which place in the midst of شب.

34.

آمِ قلبم درین میانه شب در نام آن سرور ماهر و باشد

{Answer—شهاب} آمِ قلب i.e., the reverse of آه, is ها, which place in the middle of شب.

35.

دی در میان قصه بی انتهای دل در گفتیم نام دلبر و هستیم ازان خجل

{Answer—صدیق} قصه بی انتها is قصه بی انتها, which when reversed makes صدق, in which دی comes in and makes صدیق.

36.

کی دور نام آن بت از خاطر در که به یک نقطه می شود ظاهر

{Answer—طاهر}

37.

چشم بکشا زلف بشکن جان من در بهر تسکین دل بریان من

{Answer—علی} بکشا is دل بریان, and ل is زلف, and ع is چشم. i.e., apply the vowel فتح; بشکن i.e., apply the vowel کسر; and تسکین is not giving articulation to any vowel sound.

38.

تا عقیق بر منی دید لب لعل ترا

قاف تا قاف دهد قیتمش و مشتری است

{Answer—علی} From عقیق remove ق and ق, and bring in ل. i.e., لب لعل.

39.

بر ما فکن ای شاه کرم چشم عنایت در کرد در تو در مانده درین شهر یانیدم

{Answer—عماد} چشم عنایت is the letter ع, for عين, in Arabic, means 'eyes.' Again در در مانده that is در left out of در is د. So, place ع on ما, and add د.

40.

اول فصل بهار است یا کاخِ روز : خوش بود دامنِ باغی و رخِ دلداری

Answer—فرید } Beginning of فصل is ف. روز in Arabic is د. رخ of دلدار is د. دامن of باغی is ی. ر. of which the end is ر. بهار

41.

اشکِ خونینِ درگریان خواستم پنهان کنم :

قطره بی ره رفت و در دامنِ محبوب اوفتاد :

Answer—قطب } قطره without ره is قط, and دامنِ محبوب is ب.

42.

قصه قدرت شرف هنگام وصف : از کسل گوید سما وین هست عجب

Tr.—Sharaf, in narrating the history of the creation, out of laziness speaks only of the sky, and this is strange.

Answer—کمال } کسل از کسل گوید سما i.e., says ما in place of س in کسل.

43.

گر تو می خواهی که دانی نامِ آن سیمین ذقن :

قلبِ قلبِ قلب را بر قلبِ قلبِ قلب زن :

Answer—کال } The second line means, 'Place the middle of the equivalent of قلب on the reverse of the middle of قلب'; the word قلب having three meanings—'middle,' 'equivalent or meaning,' and 'reverse.' The equivalent of قلب is عکس, of which the middle is ك. The middle of قلب is ل which, written in full, is لام, and the reverse of it is مال.

44.

مسك از راست بود هیچ ندارندش دوست :

ور سخی قلب بود تاجِ کرم بر سرِ اوست :

Answer—کیخسرو } Invert درسخی and place on it the top letter of کرم.

45.

زاهد همه تزویر و ریا می داند :

اسم و ریه عاشقی یکجا می داند :

در خرّه اش این دغل که از حد بگذشت :

در دلقِ منان نیست خدا می داند :

Answer—لقمان } دغ which take out from دغ is دغل از حد گذشت. دلقِ منان.

46.

یکدم از مسجد برون نه یای وسواس ای خطیب :
نقش آفات جو که دارند از حضور دل نصیب :

{Answer—مجدالدین} س is یای وسواس, which removed from مسجد leaves مجد. The Arabic equivalent of آفات is الدین, the نقش of which is الدین.

47.

اگرچه سیم باشد نقد دگات : بگاہ سکه شد محتاج سندان

{Answer—محسن} محتاج سندان should be read separately سن . مح to be the crown of i.e., مح تاج سندان .

48.

بتم محسود خوبان است نامش هم عیان بودی :
بجای شکل دندانش اگر شکل دهان بودی :

{Answer—محمود} س is شکل دندان, and م is شکل دهان. Change محسود into م in محسود .

49.

صورت جودست و بس خواجۀ والا کهر :
افسر ملکش کلاه مثل کلاهش کمر :

{Answer—محمود} جود is صورت جود, on the top of which is the ملک i.e., م, and the same letter forms the کمر or middle of the word.

50.

تا ز اسم قلب یار آگه شدم : دل ز فکر پییده برداختم

{Answer—مساقر} اسم قلب is مسا and taking away the دل from فکر leaves مسافر.

51.

دانه‌ها بهر تار افشاند و دل بر سر نهاد :
شمع در بزم تو و دودش ز سر بگذشته بود

{Answer—معدود} From شمع throw away the دانه i.e., the points, and سمع is left. Now place the دل or middle word at the top, and we have معد. To this add دود without its head, i.e., ود, and we have معدود.

52.

یوسف رخی طلب کن کز دولتِ عزیزى
در مصر هر محله از نو فزوده چیزى

Answer—منصور } In the 'streets', i.e., the gaps between the successive letters of the word مصر, place the letters of the word نو.

53.

مستور بود نامش و نص می کند رقیب
از بهر کشف رمز شمارِ جهات را

Answer—منصور } جهات or surfaces are six in number. Arabic for six is ست. In the word مستور change ست to نص, and we get منصور. نص کردن means 'to make manifest.'

54.

دل بی یار رفته با دیده : ره چو نم بود باز گردیده

Answer—منوچهر } Take the word چو نم, and turn back, i.e., invert the order of letters.

55.

چون دلارام در میان آید : کر نباشی تو هم دلا شاید

Answer—میرامان } دلارام in میان is مبدلارامان, from which remove دلا.

56.

دیدم مہی خرامان زان برده دل و زین سر
معلوم شد شرفرا نام شریفِ دلبر

Answer—میرامان } Write the words مہی خرامان, and from the word مہی remove the middle letter, and from خرامان the top letter.

57.

چون می شود سوار به رخسِ ستم ز کین
سر می رود تو صورتِ این ماجرا بین

Answer—میرحسین } rides on رخس, making میرخس. Now remove the top letter from کین, i.e., remove the top letter from سرمی رود. We have now میرخشین, and taking the صورت of it, we have میرحسین.

58.

یوست از مدعی و مغز از دوست : خواه کین مغز آمد و آن یوست
 Answer—موسی { are مغز دوست and ی and م are یوست مدعی
 . یوست the ی and م, مغز the central letters or مغز and و and س. Make

59.

سر صوفی بیسر در آتش انداز : مبادا راز رندان را بگوید
 Answer—ناصر { سر صوفی is ص, and Fire is نار.

60.

گریبان می درد جانم ز شوق دامن افشانی :
 بدوز از دامن دامن گریبان گریبانی :
 Answer—نجیب { گریبان is دامن, which attach to the گریبان
 (i.e., front) of دامن called in Arabic نجیب.

61.

دائما فکر شرف اندوه دلداری بود :
 چون نصیب اوست می کوشد که آن باری بود :
 Answer—نصیر { should be read separate
 نصیب in ر into ب i.e., turn آن باری بود.

62.

جان فدا کرد براهت شرف ای محل گسل : چه شود گرز سر لطف دهی ویرادل
 Answer—ولی { ل, which make the heart of وي.
 [محل گسل means breaker of promises, and شرف is the name of the
 author of the riddle.]

63.

دوشینه لبم چو در نامت می سفت : چشم تو چها کرد لب یارم گفت
 Answer—هاشم { i.e., turned چ into ج, turned چشم تو چها کرد
 چشم.

64.

گر بی تو سوخت جان شرف نام نیک یافت :
 هجرات جان گداز ترا مزد بی جد است :
 Answer—هرمز { without هجران is هر, and without
 and is مز.

65.

رنیب چون شرف از روی یار شد خرم :
عقوبت تو اگر بی نهایت چه غم :

Answer—عقوب } ی = روی یار , and بی نهایت is عقوبت.

66.

خالها داری تو و گردد زیر لب عیات :
از شرف جز صورت بی دل نماند آن زمان :

Answer—یوسف } In the word تو remove the خالها, or points, from the top to the bottom. This makes یو. The صورت of شرف is سرف, from which if you remove the heart, سف is left.

The following 'mu'ammās' are by the Author :

67.

آن ماه رو چو آمد دلها زغم رها شد :
چون او برفت نامش ورد زبان ماشه
Answer—مهر } مهر comes, and او goes, leaving مهر.

68.

چو بپر لطف بر یاران بشهر ما رسد آن مه :
شه ما خود برون آید باستقبال او آن که :

Answer—مهر } When مه comes to ما شهر it becomes مهشهر.
From this شه ما goes out, leaving مهر.

69.

هنرمندی بین کان نوجوان نادر الايام :
بندازد کنیز زلف و آرد شیر را در دام
Answer—نوشیروان } From the word نوجوان throw away the
نوشیروان, making شیر, and bring in, in its stead, the word ج, i. e., زلف.

70.

فقیر از بخت یاور میر گردد :
ز کوکبا چو بهره گیر گردد :

Answer—کوکا } The words بهره گیر are to be read as ده گیر;
ده گیر is a traveller, and ده گیر گردد will then mean 'he departs.'
From کوکبا if ده departs, کوکا is left.

CHARADES AND CONUNDRUMS.

The riddles placed under this heading stand midway between the معما and the چیستان. In the former a name has to be found out, and the name is concealed with such subtlety, that in good specimens of this class the verse appears to be a part of an ordinary poem, didactic, amorous, or descriptive, and no one would suspect a *mu'ammâ* to be underlying, unless told beforehand that there is one. Such, for instance, are numbers 45, 47, 16, 29, 30, 31, 37, 39 and several others. In the چیستان there is always an indication that it is an Enigma, and from the *description* given one has to find out what thing is referred to.

The puzzles in this section belong more to this چیستان class than to the معما, but they have affinity with the latter in this, that the solution depends on a play on words or a manipulation of letters.

1.

دو مرغ از مرغزاری کرد پرواز : بقصد هر دو شان آهنگ کردم
یکی را یا بریدم گشت سر : یکی را سر بریدم لنگ کردم

Answer—*ییسرا* a species of hawk, and *کلنگ* a crane. } Cut off the last letter of the former, and the top letter of the latter, and you have *یسر* and *لنگ*.

2.

چیست آن نام که بر حرف نخستش الفی :
گر زیادت کنی ای خسرو دین دال شود :
ور فصیحی بخرد باقی آن لفظ بزرگ :
بر زبان می گذرانند یقین لال شود :

Answer—*جلال*. } The first letter is ج whose numerical value is four, and if you add ل to it whose numerical value is one, it becomes five, which is represented by د. The remaining letters, as ingeniously mentioned in the verse, are لال.

3.

چهار حرف است نام مطلوبی : که تمنای اهل عالم گشت
هست چار و چنان عجب که از او : دو اگر بفگنی بیاند هشت

Answer—*بیهشت*. } If you take away 'two,' which is represented by ب, then *هشت* is left.

4.

نام یارم سه حرف دان و مرتج : هر یکی در حساب پنجاه و پنج

Answer—طیب } $ط = 9 = 9' = ن + 0 = 50 + 5.$

$ی = 10 = 10' = د + 0 = 1 + 5 = 9 = 9' = ن + 0 = 50 + 5.$

$ب = 2 = 2' = د + 0 = 1 + 6 = 10 = 10' = د + 0 = 1 + 5 = 9 = 9' = ن + 0 = 50 + 5.$

5.

چه چیز است آن و بها گر راست خوانی : بود در باغ ای گنج فراست
و گر خوانی تو قلبش کرده آن را : ییابی بر فلك ای ماه حکمت

Answer—لاله } reverse of which is هلال.

6.

رنگش چو رنگ زعفران : بریان چو جان عاشقان
یا دارد و پر هم بدان : جانان من گو چیست آن

Answer—پاپر } Hindi name of a thin crisp cake made from gram-flour.

7.

چه چیز است آن که باشد گرد و غلطان : دو نام زنده دارد لیک بیجان
خر آن باشد که این معنی نه فهمد : ز بز کمتر بود آن مرده نادان

Answer—خربز

8.

چيست آن مرغی که پرد در هوا : چار صد سرده شکم دوست یا

Answer—تیر } The head, belly, and the feet refer to the 1st, the 2nd, and the 3rd letter of the word, whose equivalents according to the اجد notation are 400, 10, and 200.

The following lines which occur in Firdausi's satire on Sultan Mahmood are also enigmatical and are given here though they do not come under the head 'CHARADES.'

9.

کفر شاه محمود عالی تبار : نه اندر نه آمد سه اندر چهار

نه اندر نه is 81, and سه اندر چهار is 12, which taken together make 93. In the language of signs, 90 is represented by bending the fore-finger under the thumb, and 93 by bending the other three

fingers also, so that the whole has the appearance of a fist. The line therefore means 'King Mahmood is close-fisted, or a miser.'

In the following lines by the Author the riddle is on the letter ع in imitation of the well-known enigma on the letter H, formerly attributed to Lord Byron, but now believed to have been written by Miss Katherine Fanshawe, of which the opening lines are:—

"'Twas whispered in Heaven, 'twas muttered in Hell,
And Echo caught faintly the sound as it fell;
On the confines of Earth 'twas permitted to rest,
And the depths of the Ocean its presence confest,
'Twas allotted to man with his earliest breath,
It attends him in birth, it awaits him in death."

10.

کبست آن کورا بود بر عرش جای : هست بر عالم همه جلوه نای
بوده دم زن در هیولای عدم : هم به معنی در نهاده او قدم
در عناصر بوده از آغاز دهر : می نباید در شمع و شعله چهر
در طلوع آفتابست او بدید : گاه یابان ربیع و روز عید
حایده در دعا باشد مدام : چون مجاور کعبه را کرده مقام
عاقل او را می دهد بر فرق جای : قانع او را می گذارد زیر پای
عارض خوابان از او زینت پذیر : طبع شاعر گشته از لطفش منیر
شعر و مطلع را بود دمساز او : می کنند در رعد نیز آواز او
جگر عنبر گشته از وی عشوه ساز : عاشقان را هم بدو باشد نیاز
با عقیق و لعل در معدن بود : در همه عضوست و نی در تن بود
در عراق و در عجم دارد وطن : نی به هند و نی به چین و نی ختن
رمز او سهلست بر اهل بصر : هر که دارد عین از او دارد خبر

What is it that has its place on the highest heaven, and manifests itself in splendour over the whole world?

It was breathing* even in the chaos of non-existence, and had its foot also in the next World.

* Allusion to the word دم 'breath' in عدم.

It has been in the Elements since the beginning of Time, and it shows its face in the Ray and the Flame.

It is visible at sunrise, at the end of Spring, and on the day of Eid.

In the manner of devotees it is constantly in prayer, having recluse-fashion, made the Ka'abah its abode.

The wise man gives it a place on his head, while the contented man keeps it under his foot.

The cheeks of beauties receive from it embellishment, and it is by its favour that the genius of the poet becomes bright.

Verse and the opening couplet of Odes it is given to singing.* And its voice is heard even in Thunder.

It endows the amber-scented braid of locks (of Beauties) with coquetry; and it is that of which the Lover, too, stands in need.

With Cornelian and Ruby it dwells in the Mine. In every organ it abideth, but not in the Body.

It dwells in 'Iraq and in 'Ajam (Persia), but never in India, or China, or Khotan.

Its mystery is easy to unravel for people of insight. Whosoever has eyes hath knowledge of it.

* بود دمساز means 'a friend' as well as 'singing.' بود دمساز = 'is a friend,' or 'sings.'

(چیستان) ENIGMAS.

These differ from the riddles given above in this, that the description and appearance of a certain thing are given, and the name of the thing is to be found out from the data.

These enigmas can bear translation.

1.

On a Chess-board.

چه شهر است آنکه مردم جله بیجان : گهی آباد گردد گاه ویران
بوقت جنگ تو آباد بینی : بوقت صلح باشد شهر ویران

Which is that city that is populated by lifeless men? It is sometimes flourishing and sometimes desolate. You will see it prosperous in the time of war, and desolate in the time of peace.

2.

On a Rupee.

چیست آن مه رخی و محبوبی : همه عالم فدای دیدارش
هر کرا وصل او نصیب شده : گشت آماده مقصد و کارش

Which is that moon-like beauty with whom all people are in love? Whosoever is fortunate enough to have her, can obtain all he wishes for.

3.

On a Lamp.

یاق مدور حوض دیدم مارِ سبیل در میان :
مارِ سبیل خفته در وی مرغ زرین در دهان :
آب باشد قوتِ مار و مار قوتِ مرغ دان :
مار گر بی قوت باشد مرغ میرد در زمان :

I saw a circular cistern in which was lying a silvery snake with a golden bird in his mouth. The water forms the food of the snake, who in his turn, is the food of the bird. When the food of the snake is exhausted, the bird dies in a moment.

4.

On the Nipples.

حوضی که در آن موی ننگچه بیان : نوشند ازان آب همه جانورات
آن جانورات نه که ییزند بیاد : اسب و شتر و گاو و خر و آدمیان

There is a fountain in which not a single air can enter, yet all animals can drink therefrom; not those animals that fly in the air, but horses, camels, oxen, asses, and mankind.

5.

On a Lamp.

نهنگی دیدم اندر قعر دریا : گرفته در دهان یک دانه گوهر
عجب باشد که او شکمی ندارد : ولیکن می خورد دریا سراسر

I saw, in the depths of an ocean, a whale with a pearl in his mouth. It is very strange that though he has no belly, he can drink up the whole ocean.

6.

On a pair of Weighing-scales.

یکی اسیر عجب دیدم که شش پا و دو سُم دارد :
عجائب بیش ازین بنگر میان بشت دُم دارد :

I saw a wonderful horse, who had six legs and two hoofs, and, strangest of all, he had a tail in the middle of the back.

7.

On an Onion.

چیست آن گنبد لطیف و نکو : خوردنی بهر مردم نکو رو
در برش جامهای سرخ و سفید : می کنند گریه ها کشنده او

Which is that fine and elegant dome-shaped body that is eaten by even handsome persons? It is clad in red and white garments, and whosoever kills it has to weep for it.

8.

On a Bier, with Corpse and four Corpse-bearers.

چیست آن جانور صد انگشتان : پای ده دارد و به هشت روان
بنج سر دارد و چهارش جاف : این عجایب که دیده ام بجهان

What is that animal that has a hundred fingers and ten legs, but moves only with eight? It has five heads, but four souls. This wonder I have seen in this world.

9.

On the Flame of a Lamp.

گلی دیدم که او بی خار باشد : نه دارد بو نه از گلزار باشد
نه او را کس خردنی کس فروشد : ولی بر تخت بازار باشد

I saw a rose that was without a thorn. It had no perfume, nor was it culled from a garden. No one buys it, and no one sells it, but notwithstanding that, it is to be seen in every shop in the bazaar.

10.

On a Reed-pen.

غریبی از بیابان شد بشهری : سیه کردند روی و سر بریدند
سوارش بر سه مرکب کرده او را : بیدان از سوی سر بر کشیدند

A stranger came from the forest to the city. His head was cut off and his face was blackened. He was then mounted on three horses and was dragged through a field, with his head sweeping the ground.

11.

On a Quilt.

عجب دیدم دو شوهر يك نسائی : میان هر دو باشد آشنائی
ولیکن هر دو شوهر زاده اوست : روا باشد به هر مذهب نکاحی

I saw two husbands who, though married to one wife, were on intimate terms with each other. Both the husbands are offsprings of the wife, but still the marriage is valid according to the laws of all religions.

Another reading of this enigma is:—

عجب دیدم بچشم خویشتن دوش : دو شوهر کرده يك زنا در آغوش
عجب ترکان دو شوهر زاده زان زن : نکاح شاف به هر مذهب معین

12.

On a 'Bira' of Betel-leaf.

چار کس با سی و دو کردند جنگ : کشته کشته خون شده در قعر تنگ

Four persons fought with thirty-two, and being all killed, the narrow pit wherein they fought was filled with their blood.

[The four persons are—the betel-leaf, the betel-nut, slaked lime, and catechu, and the thirty-two are the teeth.]

13.

On a Spinning Top.

صوفی خلوق دیدم تیر خورده در جگر :
کو بکومی گردد و دستار بندد بر کمر :

I saw a Soofee whose liver was pierced with an arrow. He roams about the streets, and binds his turban round his waist.

14.

On a Pen.

سوار سه اسبیه پیاده دوان ش بیدان کافور عنبر فشان
تنش روی و چهره چون زنگیان : خود اینجا و حکمش بهمازندران

Though it rides on three horses, it is running on foot, and scattering amber on a field of camphor. Its body is like that of a Roman, but its face is like that of Negroes. Though it remains here, it can govern a remote province like Máizindarán.

15.

On the Moon and the Sun.

چیت آن یادشام هفت اقلیم : به هزاران سوار می گردد
ناکبان یک سوار زرد علم : آمد و فوج شاه برهم زد

Who is that king who moves about with a retinue of thousands of knights, but whose forces are all dispersed on the appearance of a single knight with a yellow banner?

16.

On a 'Hukká'.

بوالعجب دیدم عجب تر آب در زیر و آتشش بر سر

I saw a very wonderful thing, which has water underneath and fire on the head.

17.

On the Eyes.

جفتی ز کبوتران ابلق : هستند جدا جدا معاق
پرند ییخ جا نمایند : وز خانه خود بیرون نیایند

There are a couple of black-white doves, who are tied up separately. In their flights they reach the skies, but nevertheless they never come out of their nests.

18.

On a Cotton-carding Bow.

طرفه چرخى که آن همیشه بود : از سحر تا بشام در ناله
افکند از دهان به هر ساعت : یک طرف برف یک طرف زاله

A wonderful machine is this—always groaning from morn till eve; every moment it spouts from its mouth snow on one side and hail on the other.

19.

On a Fish.

چیست آن کوهی رود پنهان : جوشنِ سیم را بیسته مبان
تا نهانست جانِ او بر جای : چون که پیدا بود شود بیجان

What is that which moves about hidden from our sight, and is girt with silver armour? So long as it is hidden it is alive, but when it comes into sight it becomes lifeless.

20.

On a Bow.

من خود کج و راستانِ زمین راست روند : دامنِ ظفرم چو کشتِ دولت دروند
یشت از یی خدمت چو کشم خم که و : از هر طرفی زمزمه زه شتوند

I myself am crooked, but the straight are straight-goers through me. When the field of glory is reaped I am the victory-skirted. When I bend my back for service, the great and small hear from all quarters the sound of "Bravo!"

[There is a pun on the word زه which means 'the bowstring' as well as 'bravo!']

21.

On a Harp.

آن پیر کدامت که چون تو بنوازش : چون کودکِ کهواره می‌گرید ازین شان

Who is that old man who, when you confer benefits on him, cries like an infant?

[There is a play on the word نواختن which means 'to confer a benefit' and also 'to play on a musical instrument.' The harp is compared to an old man because of its bent form.]

22.

On a Spider.

آن چیست که خود ریسد و خود بافد جامه :

خود جامه می‌بافد و خود باشد عریان :

Who is he that himself spins the thread and himself weaves the cloth, but in spite of his weaving the cloth himself goes about naked?

23.

On a Water-jug.

لمبتی چیست تَر و خاک مزاح : که به آییست از جهان خرسند
دست بر سر نهاده پنداری : برِ خویش می خورد سوگند

What is that handsome creature of humble disposition [literally, 'composed of clay'] who is pleased with the world if it get but a draught of water? It has its hand on its head, as if swearing by its head.

24.

On a Mango.

چِست آن درجِ زمرد رنگِ ناپیدا دهان :
چون صدف یکتا دُری ناسفته دارد درمیان :
حیرتی دارم که چون آن درج بشگافد کسی :
انگند آن گوهر ناسفته از کف رایگان :
مبدعِ صورت چو ترکیبِ وجودش قش بست :
بوستش بر مویدید آورد و مو بر استخوان :

What is that emerald-coloured casket with invisible mouth, which, like the shell of the pearl-oyster, has in its midst one unbored pearl?

I marvel much that, when any person cleaves open the casket, he should cast away from him wantonly that unbored pearl.

When the Creator of Forms designed the composition of its substance, He brought out its skin on the hair, and the hair on the bone.*

25.

On a Coconut.

گنبدی سر بسته دیدم گنبدی دیگر در او :
هست او را سه دریچه يك كشاده بسته دو :

I saw a sphere containing another sphere within itself. It has three windows, of which one is open, and the other two are closed.

* استخوان means 'a bone' as well as 'the stone of a fruit'.

26.

On a Rosary.

ماری که بود صنعتش از صنع خدا : در صد سوراخ باشد او را ماوا
هر گاه که ماهیان بر او جمع شوند : سوراخ روان گردد و مار است بجا

There is a snake, who is one of the wonders of creation. He dwells in a hundred holes; whenever he is attacked by fishes,* the holes begin to move, but the snake is stationary.

27.

On Water.

(جمال الدین اصفهانی)

آن جرم پاک چیست چو ارواح انبیا : چون روح بالطافت و چون عقل با صفا
گردنده مطیع و خروشنده خوش : مرد افکن ضعیف و سبک قیمت روا
خالی ز نقش و رنگ و چو صوفی کبود بوش : فارغ ز رنگ و بوی چو پیران پارسا
که خوار که عزیز گهی هست و گه بلند : گه تیره گاه صافی و گه درد گه دوا
که همعناض باد صبا گشته در سفر : گه در رکاب خاک زمین گشته مبتلا
مقصود و جستجوی سکندر بشرق و غرب : مطلوب آرزوی شهیدان کربلا
فرعون گشته از دیم او باطل الوجود : مانده خضر ز شربت او دائم البقا
گاهی چو جبرئیل بخاک آمده از ابر : گاهی چو مصطفی ز زمین رفته برسا

What is that thing like the souls of the prophets, full of gracefulness like a disembodied spirit, and pure like the intellect? It is roving and stationary, noisy and quiet, powerful and weak, very cheap and at the same time in great demand. It has no form or colour, but puts on a blue garment like the Soofees; and like old devotees it cares not for colour or perfume. It is sometimes unappreciated, and sometimes highly esteemed, sometimes high and sometimes low, sometimes dirty and sometimes pure, sometimes a disease and sometimes a remedy. At times it travels with the breeze, and at times it is imprisoned under ground. It was the object of Sikandar's search round the world, and of the vehement longing of the Martyrs of Karbala. It was the cause of death to Pharaoh, but of perpetual life to Khizr. Like Gabriel it sometimes comes down to the earth from the heavens; and like Mustafā it sometimes ascends to heaven from the earth.

* i.e., the fingers.

28.

On a Mirror.

(فریدالدین احوّل)

- ٬ منور چیست آن مه روی گل رخسار او گلشن
 ٬ چو شب يك روي آن تاريك چون روز آن دگر روشن
 ٬ همی خشنودند خوبانش بر روز بزم بر چهره
 ٬ همی بندند مردانش بعزم رزم بر جوشن
 ٬ اگر بوسش زنی بر رخ شود چینی رخس گلگون
 ٬ وگر آتش کشی بر روشود رویش چو اهریمن
 ٬ شود گر دم زنی رویش بیکدم چون چراغ از باد
 ٬ شود ار بگری رویش چو چشم از مردم آستن
 ٬ مر او را حلقه در گوش لیکن گوش در پشتش
 ٬ مر او را هست پشت و روی لیکن نیستش گردن

What is that shining thing like the moon, with a face like that of a flower? One of its faces is dark like the night, and the other is bright like the day. Ladies, when going to a gathering, laugh at it to its very face; and men, when going to battle, tie it on the armour.* If you kiss it on the face, its Chinese face will become rosy, but if you sigh, its face will look like that of a demon. If you puff at it, its face resembles the flame of a lamp flickering in the wind; but when you look well at it, its face becomes pregnant with a human being, like the eye with a pupil. It has an ear-ring in the ear, but the ear is situated behind the back. It has a face and a back, but it has no neck.

29.

On a Reed-pen.

(حکیم ناصر خسرو)

- ٬ آن زرد تن لاغر گل خوار سپه سار
 ٬ زرد است و نزار است چنین باشد گل خوار
 ٬ تا سرش نبری نکنند میل برفتن
 ٬ چو ت سرش ببری برود زود نگونسار

* Alluding to the polished steel plate of the armour, shining like a mirror.

- گنک است چو شد مانده گریان چو روان گشت
 زیرا که جدا نیست ز گفتارش رفتار
 مرغیست ولیکن عجیبی بی پر از ایراک
 خوردش همه قار آمد و رفتش بمنقار
 مرغی که چو در دست تو جنبد و بیند
 در جنبش او عقل ترا مردم هوشیار
 دشوار بود بانگ تو از خانه بد هلیز
 و آسان بود آوای وی از بلخ ببلغار
 راز دل من باری یکسر همه با اوست
 زیرا که امین است و سخندان و بی آزار

Look at the yellow-bodied, lean animal that eats mud, and is black-faced! Aye, mud-eaters are always in this condition. It will not be inclined to jog on unless you cut off its head, when it will begin to run with the head downwards! When it is tired, and rests, it is dumb, and it keeps talking when in motion, for its talk cannot be separated from its motion. It is a wonderful bird, but without wings. Its food is nothing but pitch, and it walks, not with its feet but with its beak. When this bird flutters in your hand, wise men can thereby gauge your intellect. Your voice can hardly reach from your rooms to the outward court, but *its* voice can be heard from Balkh to Bulgaria. I have confided all my secrets to it, for it is trustworthy, wise, and harmless.

30.

On Tears.

(مجد همگر)

- چيست آن گوهر که می زاید ز دو گوهر روان
 صورت او گوهر اما باشد از جزع یمات
 همچو باران لیک او را از دو خورشید است ابر
 کان دو خورشید جهانین را از او باشد زیان
 همچو شمع است از صفا و شمعا زان صورتی
 گاه افتد در بدن که ریزد اندر شمعان

- باشدش روزِ وداع از چهرهٔ دلبر لگت
- باشدش شبهای هجران دامن عاشق مکان
- طفلِ خورد است و روان و گرم رو افتان برو
- وز عزیزی دل بود همراه او در هر مکان
- لعبتی عریان و گر پوشد در او کس حلهٔ
- از لطافت باز نتوان یافتش در پربنات
- او چو زیقی می رود از سویم و من می کنم
- گاهش اندر آستین و گاه در دامن نهان
- گوهرش آب و چو آتش خانه سوز و پرده در
- آب را دیدی که سوزد همچو آتش خانبان

Which is that pearl that is born running, from two pearls?
In form it is a pearl, but its origin is from black beads of Yaman.
It is like rain, but two suns form its cloud; and to these suns it causes harm. It is spotless as a candle; and the candle too possesses a similar substance which sometimes falls on its body and sometimes in the candlestick. On the day of parting, the face of the sweetheart is its candlestick, and during nights of separation, the skirt of the lover is its abode. It is like a small child in motion, falling on its face in attempting to run. The heart, from love of it, is its companion everywhere. It is a naked being, and if any one cover it with a garment, it is so delicate that it disappears and cannot again be seen. Like quicksilver it runs from me, and I conceal it sometimes in my sleeve, and sometimes in my skirt. Its nature is like that of water, but like fire it can make men's bosoms burn; and it is also a tell-tale. Have you ever seen water that can, like fire, consume a household?

31.

*On a Candle.**

(Written in the form of an address.)

(منوچهر شصت گله)

- ای نهاده بر میانِ فرق جانِ خویشتن
- جسم ما زنده بجان و جان تو زنده بتن
- گر نه کوکب چرا پیدا نکردی جز بشب
- و رشی عاشق چرا گزینی همی بر خویشتن

* A very fine piece.

- ۛ بیرهن در زیر تن یوشی و یوشد هر کسی
 ۛ بیرهن بر تن تو تن یوشی همی بر بیرهن
 ۛ گر بیری آتش اندر تو رسد زنده شوی
 ۛ چون شوی بیمار گردی بهتر از گردن زدن
 ۛ بشکفی بی نو بهار و بزمی بی مهرگان
 ۛ بگری بی دیدگان و باز خندی بی دهن
 ۛ تو مرا مانی بعینه من ترا مانم همی
 ۛ دشمن خویشیم هر دو دوستدار انجمن
 ۛ خویشتن سوزیم هر دو بر مراد دوستان
 ۛ دوستان در راحتند از ما و ما اندر محن
 ۛ هر دو گریانیم و هر دو زرد و هر دو درگداز
 ۛ هر دو سوزانیم و هر دو فرد و هر دو محتجن
 ۛ آنچه من در دل نهادم بر سرت بینم همی
 ۛ آنچه تو بر سر نهادی در دلم دارد وطن

O thou who hast placed thy soul¹ in the midst of thy head! Our bodies are alive owing to our souls, but thy soul is alive owing to thy body! If thou art not a star, how is it that thou appearest not but at nights? And if thou art not a lover, why is it that thou art constantly weeping? Thy shirt² is *within* thy body! Strange! that when every one covers his body with a shirt, thou coverest thy shirt with thy body. When thou diest thou canst become alive on being set fire to, and when thou art ill thou canst be cured by being beheaded.³ Thou blossomest without Spring, and witherest without Autumn; thou weepest without eyes, and thou laughest⁴ without a mouth. Thou resemblest me, and verily I resemble thee, for we both are our own enemies and are friends of the assembly. We both burn ourselves in order to gratify our friends. Our friends are in comfort owing to us, but we ourselves are in trouble. We both are weeping and pale, burning and melting, lonely and undergoing an ordeal. That⁵ which I have placed within my heart, I see on thy head, and what thou hast placed on thy head has its abode in my heart.

1 The flame. 2 The wick. 3 Snuffing the candle.

4 An allusion to the flickering of the candle. 5 Fire.

32.

On the Cloud.

(جلی)

- ۱۰ چه جرم است آن برآورده سراز دریای موج افکن
 ۱۰ بکوه اندر دمان آتش ببحر اندر کشان دامن
 ۱۰ رخ گردون بلون او بعنبر گشته آلوده
 ۱۰ دل هامون ز اشک او بگوهر گشته آبستن
 ۱۰ گهی از صنع او گردد نهفته شاخ در لولو
 ۱۰ گهی از سمی او گردد سرشته خاک بالادن
 ۱۰ بنالد سخت بی علت بجوشد تند بی کینه
 ۱۰ بخندد گرم بی شادی بگیرد زار بی شبون
 ۱۰ گهی باشد چو بر طرف زمرد یخته عنبر
 ۱۰ گهی باشد چو بر لوح خیاهن ریخته چندن
 ۱۰ زمین آرای و گردون سای و دود اندام و آتش دل
 ۱۰ شبه دیدار و گوهر بار و مینا پوش و دیانت
 ۱۰ ز لاله راغ را دارد یر از بیجاده گون رایت
 ۱۰ ز سبزه باغ را دارد یر از پیروزه گون جوشن
 ۱۰ گهی با بحر همخاه گهی با باد همیشه
 ۱۰ گهی با کوه همزانو گهی با چرخ همبرزن
 ۱۰ بشوید چهره نسرين بشابد طره سنبل
 ۱۰ ببندد دیده زرگس بدرد جامه سوسن
 ۱۰ چو روی مردم ظالم جهان از جسم او تیره
 ۱۰ چو رای خسرو عادل زمین از چشم او روشن

What form is it that rises from the billowy sea, breathing fire over the mountains and trailing its skirt over the ocean? It has imparted its own amber hue to the face of the sky, and its tears have made the heart of the desert teem with pearls. At times its art covers the tree-branches with jewels, and at times its craft kneads the dust with laudanum. It groans aloud without having pain, rages furiously without thoughts of vengeance, laughs heartily without joy, and weeps copiously without cause

of grief. At times it looks like amber sifted over an emerald, and at times it is like sandal dust sprinkled over a granite tablet. It is earth-adorned and sky-grazer, smoke-bodied and fire-hearted, jet-hued and pearl-pouring, crystal-clad and brocade-bodied. By means of the tulip it makes the meadows wave with coral-coloured flags, and by means of the verdure it girds the garden with an armour of turquoise. At times it is a co-tenant with the ocean, and at times a co-operator with the wind; at times it is a crony of the mountain, and at times a neighbour of the sky. It washes the face of the wild-rose, and plaits the locks of the hyacinth; it covers the eyes of the narcissus, and tears the garment of the lily. Its body makes the world dark like the face of tyrants, and its glance makes the earth shine like the intellect of the just King.

33.

On a Watch.

(توحید شیرازی)

چیت آن سیمین تن خورشید شکر مه عذار
 بی زبان و بندله گوی دست و پا و ره سیار
 نو عروسی بی حجاب و شاهدي بی روی یوش
 ساده در ظاهر ولی باطن همه نقش و نگار
 گاه چون دزدان یک یایش بیاورند سخت
 گاه چون شاهان بیوشندش لباس زرنگار
 روز و شب در ناله و یک دم چو می ماند خوش
 می دهند از روی خشمش گوشه‌ای بی شار
 خانه در وی دو دزد تنگ چشم سخت دل
 پای شان در بند و با آن بند دایم راهوار
 نیستش سر لیکن از پا تا سر یکجا دهن
 نیستش پا لیکن از سر تا یایش ره سیار
 بوالعجب چنگی که از زخمه که او را بر زنند
 خویشتن می زخمه بر خواند یک لیل و نهار
 جادویی زیسان که دیده روز و شب اندر روش
 چون فکو پینی یک جا دایم او را قرار
 همچو یوسف راست گوی و پای او دایم بیند
 همچو عیسی پاک زاد و جای او دایم بدار

What is that silver-bodied thing that has Sun-like form and Moon-like face, that is tongueless and still a chatterer, that is limbless and still a traveller? It is a young bride without her mantilla, a charming damsel without her veil. It has a plain exterior, but the interior is bedecked with ornaments. At times it is hung up by a single leg, like thieves, and at times it is clad in brocade, like kings. It keeps moaning night and day, and if for once it become silent, it has its ear twisted by way of punishment. It is like a house in which there are two thieves hard-hearted and narrow-eyed (*i.e.*, greedy), who are moving about though they have their legs fettered. No head has it, but from top to bottom it is all mouth; no leg does it possess, but still from head to foot it is in motion. It is like a wonderful harp that, if once struck with the plectrum, will of itself, without further strokes, go on playing for one night and day. Who has seen a marvel like this that though it is moving day and night, if you observe aright, it is stationary in one place? Like Joseph, though it is a speaker of truth, it has always its legs shackled; and like Jesus, though it is of pure birth, it is always hung on the cross (*i.e.*, the wall-peg).

34.

(Lines by the Author.)

On a Gold Watch.

چه مرغست آن که او پنهان بیطن اندر زبان دارد
 هم او بر سینه مردم بگاہان آشیان دارد
 گهی بر ساعدِ خوبان گهی در جیبِ محبوبان
 گهی در یرنجان پنهان بدرج اندر مکان دارد
 مدور بیکری زرین تنی خورشید رخساری
 که بر سر کاکلی دلکش بسان طلیسان دارد
 بر خسارش ز خال و خط بسی نقش و نگار آمد
 قلابی آبگون بر رو بجای یاسبان دارد
 نقاب از بهر آن نامد که پوشد رویش از مردم
 که آنرا پاک از کرد و مصون از هر زبان دارد

دو دارد دست لیکن هست دائم جای شان بر رو
 ندارد یا ولی خود را باسانی روان دارد
 بگاهِ ظهر و نصفِ شب بود سرگرم در طاعت
 دعا را دستِ خود بر کرده همچون عابدان دارد
 بود ساکن بجائی و همان دم نیز در رفتار
 نه کس چون اوست آواره که گردش هر زمان دارد
 سرودِ خوش گه رفتار از حلقش شود جاری
 سراپد روز و شب لیکن نه گاهی سرگران دارد
 چو در ماند ز رفتار و بگردد خامش و بیجان
 سرش بیچند و سرگردان کنند و باز جان دارد
 نه او جوهر فروشت و بدارد کار با جوهر
 نه او را کار با جنگست و همواره کُان دارد
 مورّخ نیست این مرغ و نه کارش داستان گوئی
 ولیک از وقتِ بگذشته محقق داستان دارد
 تنش از زر بود لیکن هم از یولاد عضوی چند
 بجائی کو شکم دارد همانا او دهان دارد
 اگر یک بار در سالی خورد دو قطره روغن
 توانا گردد و چستی بسان نوجوان دارد

What bird is it that has its tongue in its belly, and has its nest, at times, on the breasts of people?

At times it is on the wrist of beauties, at times in the pocket of lovely ladies, and at times, wrapped up in costly silk, it has its abode in a casket.

Round of form, gold-bodied, and with Sun-like face is this creature, having on its head a charming queue* hanging in the manner of a turban-scarf.†

Its cheeks are richly embellished with moles and lines, and it keeps on its face a crystal veil as a protector.

* The watch-chain.

† طيلسان is that part of the turban which hangs from the head over the shoulder.

The veil is not meant to conceal its face from the gaze of people, but to keep it clear of dirt, and to guard it against all harm.

It has two hands, but their place is permanently on the face; it has no legs, but it can easily keep itself moving.

At noon and at midnight it is absorbed in devotions—it has its hands uplifted in prayer in the manner of devout men.

It may be rooted to a spot, and be in motion at the same time; there is like it no vagabond that is always on the move.

When it is in motion, a sweet melody flows from its throat; night and day it keeps singing, but headache it never has.

When it stops moving, and becomes still and lifeless, people twist its head and make it giddy*, and then it again becomes alive.

It is not a jeweller, and still it has to do with jewels.† Fighting is not its affair, but it always keeps a bow.‡

This bird is not a chronicler, and Narrative is not its function, but yet it keeps a true record of past time.

Of gold is its body, but a few members are also of steel; and verily, where its belly is situated it has its mouth.

If once a year it partakes of two drops of oil, it is invigorated, and becomes active like a youth.

* سرگردان 'giddy', means literally 'revolving the head.' The allusion is to the winding of a stem-winder watch.

† The jewels inside the watch used for pivot-holes.

‡ بجان 'bow,' is also the 'watch-spring.'

THE CYNIC'S GLOSSARY.

—:o:—

Under this head I give the definitions of Mulla Do-pyâzah (a court wit of the time of Akbar) and of his prototype Ubeid Zâkâni. These definitions are remarkable for the caustic wit contained in them. A similar but very much larger work in the English language is the charming "Tin Trumpet" of Horace Smith, and also a clever recent production, "The Cynic's Word-Book" of Ambrose Bierce. I give a few extracts from both the English authors for comparison with the Persian writers.

From the "Tin Trumpet."

Ambiguity.—A quality deemed essentially necessary to the clear understanding of diplomatic writings, acts of parliament, and law proceedings.

Destiny.—The scapegoat which we make responsible for all our crimes and follies.

Eyeglass.—A toy which enables a coxcomb to see others, and others to see that he is a coxcomb.

Kitchen.—The burial place of the epicure's health and fortune.

Satire.—A glass in which the beholder sees everybody's face but his own.

National Debt.—Mortgaging the property of our posterity, that we may be better enabled to destroy our contemporaries.

Scandal.—What one-half the world takes a pleasure in inventing, and other half in believing.

From "The Cynic's Word-Book."

Belladonna.—In Italian, a beautiful lady; in English, a deadly poison. A striking example of the essential identity of the two tongues.

Congratulation.—The civility of envy.

Friendless.—Having no favours to bestow; destitute of fortune; addicted to utterance of truth and common-sense.

Incompatibility.—In matrimony, a similarity of tastes, particularly the taste of domination.

Definitions of Mulla Do-pijazah.	Words.		
چغلِ مخفی	فرشته
کاهلِ زمان	بادشاه
هدفِ تیرِ آهِ بیچارگان	وزیر
گره منتظرِ سوراخِ موش	واقع نویس
تازه روزگار	خوشامدگو
مجتهدِ دروغ	وکیل
عملدارِ بدبانت	بیوقوف
پیکِ اجل	طیب
تخته مشقِ طیبیان	بیمار
تعریفِ گرِ شوهرِ بیشین	بیوه
گدایِ متکبر	شاعر
دایمِ گر سینه	ملا
ریشخندِ رو برو	آئینه
دستگیرِ درماندگان	رشوت
التفاتِ پادشاهان	داروی بیهوشی
حاکمِ خلوت نشین	آفتِ سماوی بر سرِ خلائق
گرستگی بر سرِ بی روزگاران	شمسیرِ خدائی
گردابِ فریب	صوفی
یعنی شهابِ خزید و مرا تعظیم کنی	سلام علیک
شوهرِ زود طلب	بیوه نوحه گر
در خوابِ کاهلان خلل انداز	مودن
رویہ	یارِ وفادار
واقعہ طلب	بہادر
دستِ آویزِ مکر	ریشِ درازِ سفید
دشمنِ همه کس	راست گو
نیمِ رضا	خاموشی

Definitions of <i>Mulla Do-pyázah</i> .	Words.
خر در گِل	فرضدار ...
خود را از همه دانا تر شمردن	حماقت ...
در هر سخن بالله	کذب اب ...
اختیارِ خود فروختن	نوآوری ...
کار بی کاران	شکار ...
بینام اجل	مرض ...
نصف الملاقات	مکتوب ...
جاسوسِ نزدیکی	خوشدامن ...
منتظرِ آوازِ طبق	مهمان ...
نتیجه کدخدائی	فلاکت ...
نصیبِ بی روزگاران	گرسنگی ...
آنچه مردم را بی فایده بیمار کنند	فکر ...
آنکه عقلِ معاش ندارد	دانشمند ...
ملك الموت اطفال	معلم ...
مطالعه اشعارِ ناخوب	امّ النوم ...
آنکه همه را بیمار خواهد	عطار ...
آنچه صوفیا را در وجد آرد	بنک ...
ظرفی که به هیچ پر نشود	چشمِ مسک ...
نمونه ملک الموت	کوتوال ...
رشوت خور	قاضی ...
مهمانِ بعد از سه روز	مردود ...
وقتِ ریدن جای نایاب	اضطراب ...
تکیه نا مرادان	صبر ...
مردِ بی روزگار	پر عیب ...
از لذتِ جهان محروم	قائب ...

Definitions of <i>Ubeid Zakani</i> .	Words.		
آن که بگوید و نکند	واعظ
خورده دزد	صراف
قلاب	زرگر
کذاب	منجم
جلاد	طیب
آن که بریش دنیا خندد	مجرد
کار بی کاران	عشق

Words.	Definitions of <i>Mulla Do-pydzah</i> .
Angel	... A hidden tell-tale.
King	... The idlest man of the time.
Wazier	... The target for the arrows of the sighs of the oppressed.
Reporter	... The cat lying in wait for the mouse to come out of its hole.
Flatterer	... One who drives a thriving trade.
Advocate	... One ready for any lie.
Fool	... An officer who is honest.
Physician	... The messenger of death.
Ill man	... The slate on which the physician learns his alphabets.
Widow	... One who is in the habit of praising her former husband.
Poet	... A proud beggar.
Mulla	... One who is always hungry.
Mirror	... One that laughs at you to your face.
Bribe	... The resource of those whose cause is lame.
Intoxicating wine	... The favour of kings.
National calamity	... A ruler given to the pleasures of the Harem only.
The Sword of God	... The hunger of the unemployed.
Soofee	... A whirlpool of deceit.
Salutation	... A polite hint to others to get up and greet you with respect.

Words.	Definitions of <i>Mulla Do-pyāzāh</i> .
Weeping widow ...	One who is in great haste to get another husband.
Muezzin ...	One who disturbs the sleep of the lazy.
Faithful friend ...	The rupee.
Brave man ...	One who seeks dangers and accidents.
Long, white beard	A trap for the unwary.
Truthful man ...	One who is regarded as an enemy by every one.
Silence ...	Half consent.
Debtor ...	An ass in a quagmire.
Stupidity ...	Regarding one's self as wiser than the rest.
Liar ...	One who makes a frequent use of the expression 'I swear by God.'
Service ...	Selling one's independence.
Hunting ...	The occupation of those who have no work to do.
Illness ...	The message of death.
Epistle ...	A half visit.
Mother-in-law ...	A spy in your house.
Guest ...	One who is impatient to hear the clatter of the dishes.
Poverty ..	The consequences of marriage.
Hunger ...	That which falls to the lot of those who are out of employ.
Anxiety ...	That which uselessly makes a man ill.
Learned man ...	One who does not know how to earn his livelihood.
Schoolmaster ...	One whom the children regard as the Angel of Death.
Soporific ...	Reading the verses of a dull poet.
Druggist ...	One who wishes every one to be ill.
'Bhang' ...	That which causes religious ecstasy in the Soofees.
Miser's eye ...	A vessel which is never full.
Kotwal ...	A type of the Angel of Death.
Kazi ...	One who takes bribes.
The-good-for-nothing ...	The guest who outstays three days.
Perturbation ...	Call of nature and no suitable place available.
Patience ...	The prop of the disappointed.
Man of Defects ...	An unemployed man.
Penitent ...	He who has worldly pleasures out of his reach.

Words.	Definitions of <i>Ubeid Zákání</i> .
Preacher ...	One who speaks but practises not.
Money-changer ...	Stealer of change.
Goldsmith ...	A maker of false coins.
Astrologer ...	A liar.
Physician ...	An executioner.
Bachelor ...	One who can laugh at the whole world.
Love ...	The occupation of the unemployed.

END OF PART I.

PART II.

In this section are given witty and humorous stories and anecdotes of which Persian verses form no component part. Several stories are of the wit and humour of the Arabs, but having been given in Persian books, are included here. Story No. 219 is not to be found in books but was narrated to me. It, however, smacks of Indian origin.

The translation, it must be added, is very free, and some of the stories have been curtailed.

STORIES AND ANECDOTES, WITTY AND HUMOROUS.

—:o:—

1. Nowsherwân was informed that a person calling himself one of the lowliest of Arabs wanted to see him. The king ordered him to be admitted, and when he came, asked him who he was and whence he came.

"I am one of the noblest of Arabs," replied he.

"But you just now said to my porter that you were one of the *lowliest* of Arabs!" said Nowsherwân in some surprise.

"True, your Majesty," replied he, "I was but an insignificant man then, but now that I have had the honour of seeing your royal countenance, I am the noblest of Arabs."

The king smiled at this delicate flattery, and ordered some reward to be given to the man.

2. One day when Nowsherwân was taking his dinner, a slave, in bringing a dish, spilled some gravy on the royal dress. Nowsherwân turned towards the slave with a dark frown, whereupon the slave emptied the whole dish on the robe of the king. After the first moment of surprise and anger, Nowsherwân asked the slave what he meant by such conduct. The slave replied, "O king! from your eyes I could see that you intended to put me to death. I was afraid that the people would accuse you of injustice, saying, that for the offence of merely spilling a drop of gravy on your dress you killed a man. I therefore committed a greater offence, so that (since I am to die in any case), people might not call you cruel or unjust."

Nowsherwân smiled and forgave the slave.

3. Khusro Parwiz once ordered 8,000 direms to be paid to a fisherman, as a reward for bringing to him a very large fish. When the fisherman rose to depart, one of the direms fell from his hand and rolled on the ground; and he stooped to pick it up. Sheereen, who was with the king, whispered to him, "Look at the meanness of the fellow! He does not let go even a single direm." Khusro accordingly recalled the fisherman, and said to him, "Were not those 8,000 direms sufficient for you, that you stooped low to pick up even a single direm, that had rolled away from your hands?"

"The reward of your Majesty has made me rich," replied the fisherman, "but I was afraid that if the coin remained on the ground, the auspicious name of your Majesty on the coin might get trampled upon."

Khusro was surprised at this ready wit, and ordered that 4,000 direms more should be given to the fisherman.

4. Khusro Parwiz had at his Court a musician named Bârbad, who was unequalled for his skill in playing on musical instruments, and Bârbad had again a slave who was gifted with a most enchanting voice. Khusro always took great delight in listening to the instrumental music of Bârbad and the singing of the slave; but by-and-by jealousy of the slave crept into the heart of Bârbad, and he had him killed.

Khusro, on hearing of this incident, became very angry and said to Bârbad, "Wretch! What is it that thou hast done? Half of my delight was in thy play on the instruments, and the other half in the singing of thy slave: now that thou hast destroyed the source of this half of my enjoyment thou shalt be punished with death for the offence."

Bârbad though trembling for his life, had the presence of mind to reply, "Your Majesty, I out of folly and in a fit of passion deprived you of half of your enjoyment; but is it not strange that you, in all your senses, are now bent on depriving yourself of the other half of your enjoyment by putting me to death?"

Khusro was struck with the reply, and forgave him.

5. An old woman came to Prophet Muhammad, and said: "O Apostle of God! intercede for me with God, so that my sins may be forgiven me, and I may be admitted into Paradise."

"Do you not know," replied he, "that old women obtain no entrance into Paradise?"

The woman, on hearing this reply, began to cry and lament, whereupon the Prophet added with a smile,—"because old women are first changed into young maids."

The old woman went away satisfied.

6. Once a woman came to see the Prophet. She was asked who was her husband. She replied such and such a one.

" Oh! the man with the whiteness in his eyes? " asked the Prophet by way of joke.

" Oh no; my husband has no such defect," she replied.

" But he has," rejoined he.

So the woman, on returning home, began to look long and searchingly into the eyes of her husband, whereat he inquired why she acted in this manner. She replied: " The Prophet has said that there is whiteness in your eyes."

The man laughed and said: " He told you the truth. Don't you see that the white portion of my eyes occupies a far larger space than the black portion?"

7. It is mentioned of the Prophet Muhammad that a man came to him and requested him to give him an animal to ride on, " for," said he, " my legs are weak and I am unable to walk much." The Prophet replied that he would give him the offspring of a camel. " O Apostle of God ! " said the man, " how can the young one of a camel bear the load of a big man like me? Give me one of the camels that I see before me." " And is not each of these the offspring of a camel?" asked the Prophet with a smile.

8. Caliph Omar used to walk about the streets in disguise, at night time, in order to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the condition of the people he governed.

One night he heard some noise proceeding from a house, and as the door was locked from inside, he climbed up an adjoining wall, and looked into the house from a window which was situated at the top. He saw a man and a woman engaged in drinking wine and singing; and as indulgence in wine is prohibited in the Koran, he cried out in anger, " Man, art thou not ashamed to sin in this way? Dost thou think that thy sin is concealed from the sight of God?" The man, who had recognised Omar, bowed and replied, " O Commander of the Faithful ! I demand justice from thee. If I have committed one sin, thou hast committed three." " If thou canst prove that," said Omar, taken aback, " I will forgive thee." " Why," replied the man, " the Lord has said, ' thou shall not pry into the affairs of thy neighbours,' and thou hast just broken this commandment; secondly, the Lord says, ' when thou enterest a house, greet the people within with a peace-salutation,' and thou hast not done so;

and, thirdly, the Lord says, 'when thou enterest a house, enter through the door,' and thou hast entered through the window.'

Omar laughed, and went his way, but first exacted a promise from the man not to indulge in wine in future.

9. Hormuzân, governor of Shuster, was brought a captive before Khalif Omar, who ordered him to be executed. Hormuzân requested to have some drink supplied to him, as he was very thirsty. A cup of water was given to him, but he seemed in such fear of death that he could not swallow, whereupon Omar, to reassure him, said that he would not be killed till after he had drunk the water. Hormuzân on hearing this spilled the water on the ground, and said to the Khalif, "You cannot kill me now unless you break your promise." The Khalif was taken aback, but seeing he had been cleverly entrapped, gave Hormuzân his life.

10. One day Ali saw in a mosque an Arab, who seemed to be in a great hurry to get over his prayers, and who did not devote proper time to his prostrations and genuflections. Ali becoming angry, raised his whip to strike him, on perceiving which the man began reciting his prayers over again with a slower accent and with the proper prostrations. When he ended, Ali asked him whether the first prayer was the better one or the last. "The first was the better," replied the Arab, "for that I offered from fear of God, while the second one was from fear of you."

11. Ali had a brother named 'Aqîl, who had gone over to the side of Moâwiyeh, the enemy of Ali. One day Moâwiyeh said to 'Aqîl, "Your brother Ali has discarded you, and I have taken you under my protection. Well, I shall be best pleased with you when you publicly curse him." "Very well," said 'Aqîl, "come and listen to what I shall say." He then mounted the pulpit and said to the people: "O ye people! I have been commanded by Moâwiyeh bin 'Abu Sufyân to curse my brother Ali bin Abu Táleb: May God curse him." He then came down from the pulpit. But Moâwiyeh was not satisfied. "I am in doubt," said he, "whether you have fulfilled your promise, for the curse might as well apply to me as to him."

12. A wag named N'acemân, once saw an Arabhawking honey in the streets. As he knew well that a certain Sheikh of his acquaintance was fond of honey, he brought the man to the house of

the Sheikh, and knocked at the door. The door was opened by some of the servants, who were told by him to take the honey and carry it to their master. The servants thinking that N'aeemân had brought the honey as a present, did as they were bid. In the meantime, the wag after telling the Arab that he would be paid by the people of the house, went away.

The Arab, after waiting for a long time and not seeing anyone coming out to pay him the money, cried out: "O people of the house! if you do not approve of my honey, return it to me; and, if you have kept it, pay me the value thereof."

When the Sheikh was informed of this, he understood that, N'aeemân had played him a joke, and ordered the money to be paid to the Arab. On meeting N'aeemân on another occasion, the Sheikh asked him what had led him to act in the manner he did. N'aeemân replied, "O venerable Sheikh! I knew you were fond of honey, and so, I simply brought it to you—*along with the hawker!*"

13. In the time of Abdul-Malik Marwân, there were two lovers, Jameel and Shabiyah, who were well-known for the intensity of their passion for each other. One day Abdul-Malik, who was curious to see what sort of beauty was Shabiyah, had her brought to his court. Finding her dark-skinned and lean, he asked her: "What beauty did Jameel see in you that he took a fancy to you?" She immediately retorted—"And what merit did the people see in you that they elected you to rule over them?"

Abdul-Malik Marwân was silenced.

14. Once a beggar importuned Abdul-Malik-bin-Marwân to give him some alms. Abdul-Malik said: "Go, ask alms of God." "I have already done so," replied the beggar, "and He has referred me to you."

Abdul-Malik laughed, and gave him a coin.

15. A poet recited in the presence of Hashâm-bin-Abdulmalek a poem in his praise. Hashâm said to him: "Our Prophet has forbidden us to praise any one to his face." The poet artfully replied, "I have not *praised* you. I have simply enumerated the good qualities God had blessed you with, so that you might be thankful." Hashâm said, "These words of thine are better than thy poem," and gave him a suitable reward.

16. The Khalif Mansoor Abbasi once said to the Commander of his forces, who had just made a demand for the pay of the troops, "It has been rightly observed that a dog should be kept hungry, so that he will follow his master wherever he goes."

"You are right," rejoined the Commander, "but then you should remember, that if another person were to come and offer the dog a morsel, there would be every probability of the dog quitting his master and following the other man."

The Khalif was wise enough to take the hint.

17. * The Khalif Al-Mansûr was preaching one day at Damascus, and said, "O ye people! It is incumbent upon you to give praise to the Most High that He has given me to reign over you. He has taken away the plague which had come amongst you." But a certain Arab cried out to him, "Of a truth, Allah is too merciful to give us both thee and the plague at one time!"

18. * *How Ibn-Harîmah was saved from punishment.*

Ibn-Harîmah went into the presence of Al-Mansûr and offered him congratulations. And Al-Mansûr said to him, "Ask me of thy desire." So he replied, "That thou shouldst write to thy vicegerent at Al-Medînah that should he find me drunk he is not to punish me." "There is no means of escaping that," said Al-Mansûr. "I have no other wish," said Ibn-Harîmah. So Al-Mansûr commanded his scribe, "Write to my vicegerent at Al-Medînah: If Ibn-Harîmah is brought to thee drunk, flog him with eighty strokes, but flog him by whom he is brought with a hundred strokes."

• 19. The court physician of Khalif Mansûr was a Christian, to whom the Khalif once said, "Become a Mussulman, and I promise thee Paradise." "My lord!" replied the physician, "whether in Hell or in Paradise, I would prefer to be where my ancestors and relations are."

20. The munificence of Mehdi Abbasi towards his followers and relatives was very well known. But nevertheless one of his relations was always in poor circumstances, which fact was made known to Mehdi. Mehdi said, "If this is the case, the fault does not

* From the "*Ilam-en-nâs—The Early Caliphs*" by Mrs. Godfrey Clerk.

lie with me but with his destiny"; and in order to prove his words, he ordered that a purse of gold should be placed in a very conspicuous position in the middle of a bridge, and the man was sent in that direction on some trivial affair. The man, however, returned without having seen the purse, which very much surprised those who were present. On being asked how he could not see a purse placed in so prominent a place, he replied, "When I was going to cross the bridge, a thought occurred to me that I should try to do so with my eyes shut, so that I may know whether I should be able to cross the bridge if I were to become blind. And so, both in going and returning, I went over that part of the road with my eyes shut!"

21. Khalif Hâroon had a discussion with his vizier as to which was more delicious—*fâloodah*, or the confection of almonds. It was decided that Kâzi Abu Yusuf should be called upon to pronounce his judgment on the disputed point.

The Kâzi came, and after hearing both sides, remarked: "It is not proper to give an award in the absence of the claimants. Have the two dishes brought before me." Accordingly the two dishes were brought before the Kâzi, who partook of each and ate till he was satisfied. Hâroon then said to him: "Now decide which is the better dish." Abu Yusuf smiled, and stroking his belly, replied: "O Commander of the Faithful! both the *fâloodah* and the confection of almonds are now lying amicably together inside my stomach. Then, where is the necessity of my causing a rupture between the two, by giving a decision in favour of any of them!" Hâroon laughed and gave the Kâzi a thousand Ashrafees.

22. A young man was brought before Khalif Hâroon-ar-Rashid for theft. The Khalif ordered his hands to be cut off. The youth's mother interceded for him, urging that the youth was her sole support.

"If I let him go," said the Khalif, "I should be a sinner in the eyes of God." "O Khalif!" retorted the woman, "you must be committing a hundred sins daily, for which you must be asking pardon of God, and will one additional sin matter much?"

The Khalif laughed and had the man released.

23. Asmaee, a wit of the time of Hâroon-ar-Rashid was once dining with his royal master, when *fâloodah* was brought on the

table, whereupon Asmaee observed that many of the desert Arabs were unacquainted even with this well-known dish. Hâroon said, "I cannot believe this to be true, unless you bring forward some proofs."

It happened after this that Hâroon once went a hunting along with Asmaee, and they saw an Arab coming towards them from the desert. Hâroon told Asmaee to bring the Arab to him; so, the latter went to the Arab and said, "The Commander of the Faithful sends for you; come with me."

"Have the Faithful a commander?" asked the Arab.

"Yes," replied Asmaee.

"I cannot believe it," said the Arab, "and I will not come."

Asmaee hereupon abused him, which very much incensed the Arab, who caught hold of him by the collar; and then the two began to struggle with each other, Hâroon all the while witnessing the scene and laughing. At last the Arab managed to drag Asmaee to where Hâroon was standing, and said, "O Commander of the Faithful! this man has abused me; I seek justice at your hands."

"Give him two *direms*," exclaimed Hâroon, with a view to have some fun.

"Give him two *direms*!" exclaimed the Arab; "*Subhân Allâh*! it was he who abused me, and am I to pay him money for it?"

"Even so," replied Hâroon; "such is my judgment."

The Arab then turned towards Asmaee, and abusing him twice said, "Give me four *direms* now according to the decision of the Commander of the Faithful."

Hâroon laughed heartily and ordered that the Arab should be conducted to the palace. This was done, and soon afterwards dinner was served, to which all sat down to do justice. After the Arab had partaken of several dishes, *fâloodah* was brought in, on which Asmaee whispered to Hâroon—"I am sure, the fellow does not know what the dish consists of."

"If it be so," said Hâroon, "I'll give thee a purse of money."

The Arab was all the while devouring the *fâloodah* with great relish, and with all the eagerness of a man who had not tasted the like before.

"Can you tell me, O Arab!" said Hâroon, "what is it that you are eating?"

"By God! I do not know," replied he. "But God speaks in the Koran of '*fruits and dates and pomegranates*.' Dates I have seen, therefore I believe this must be a pomegranate."

"O Commander of the Faithful!" said Asmaee, "give me two purses now, for not only does the fellow not know *faloodah* but he has not even seen a pomegranate!"

The Khalif ordered that two purses should be given to Asmaee, and likewise a handsome present to the Arab.

24. A person was accused of heresy and brought before Hâroon-ar-Rasheed, who asked him, "Is it true what the people say of you?"

He replied: "How can the people know of my belief or unbelief? The fact is, I am regular in the performance of the daily prayers, and in keeping fasts according to the dictates of religion."

Hâroon said, "If you do not acknowledge your heresy, I shall have you flogged to make you confess it."

The man replied, "O Khalif! Your cousin used to flog persons in order to make them acknowledge the truth of Islam, and do you intend flogging me to make me confess to heresy?"

The Khalif felt ashamed, and let him go.

25. One day Ja'afar Barmaki and Khalif Hâroon went out riding, when they came across a string of camels laden with gold, which were being taken to the Court. The Khalif asked, "Whence are these camels?" Whereupon the driver said, "These camels bear the presents which Ali-bin-Isa has sent your Majesty from Khorasan." Ali had been recently appointed ruler of Khorasan in place of Ja'afar's brother Fazl who had been dismissed. The Khalif turned to Ja'afar, and by way of taunt said, "Where was all this gold in the days when thy brother was ruler?" "In the purses of the rightful owners," quietly replied Ja'afar.

26. Some men of Koofah went to Khalif Mâmoon to complain of a ruler he had appointed over them. But the Khalif paid no heed to their complaints and remarked that the governor was a just, kind-hearted, and able man, and that he had no equal in these qualifications. Hereupon, one of the men of Koofah got up

and said: "O Khalif! If the governor is really the man you have described him to be, why should he be reserved for one province only?—why not send him to other provinces one after another, so that all your subjects may be equally benefited? You have already made him stay with us too long."

Māmūn laughed and said, "Well, if you do not like to have him, I'll not force him upon you."

[According to another version, the retort was: "O Khalif, if such be the case, dismember him and send a limb to each of thy provinces so that no part of thy kingdom be without justice!"]

27. Once Khalif Mutawakkil went out for sport, and shot an arrow at a bird, but missed his mark. Hereupon a courtier exclaimed, "Excellent!" The Khalif turned to him and said with asperity, "Such praise is an insult." The courtier replied, "I praised not your skill but your clemency, for at the last moment your compassion for the bird prevailed and made you shoot wide of the mark."

The Khalif was pleased and gave him a thousand dinars.

28. Khalif Mu'atazid Billah was in need of money for a campaign. He was told that a Magian of Baghdad had the necessary sum. The man was sent for, and he agreed to lend the money. The Khalif said, "Are you not afraid of the money not being returned?" "Why should not I trust you," said the Magian, "when God Himself has trusted you with the government of this kingdom, a trust which you have so nobly fulfilled?"

29. A slave of Amr-bin-Lais committed some fault for which Amr, at the instigation of his grand vizier, ordered him to be executed.

The slave turned to Amr, and prostrating himself before him said, "Whatever your Majesty orders be it done! But I am so much grateful to you for past favours that I would if possible save you from a predicament on the Day of Judgment, when you would be called to account for shedding my blood. Kill me, but do so with justice." "How so?" asked Amr. "Allow me to kill the vizier," said the slave, "and then you will have reason and justice on your side in killing me in return." Amr smiled, and turning to the vizier said, "This seems to be just. What say you to it?" "Your Majesty," exclaimed the vizier, "let the rascal go; I had rather keep my head on my shoulders than make it the basis of retributive justice!"

30. A person, who claimed to be a second Moses, was brought before the Caliph of the time. The Caliph said to him : "Moses could change his staff into a serpent ; if thou art Moses, where is thy staff?"

"Moses performed this miracle," replied the man, "because Pharaoh claimed to be God. If you, too, lay claim to Divinity, I will show you miracles, not otherwise."

"Thou art a fool," said the Caliph.

"Know you not," replied the man, "that a prophet and the people amongst whom he appears are of the same stock? As the people, so the prophet."

The Caliph laughed and bade him go his ways.

31. A Caliph went a hunting, and in the ardour of the chase he became separated from his followers. He arrived at the tent of an Arab, and dismounting from his horse, asked for food. The Arab took him into the tent and laid before him a piece of oaten bread and a quantity of milk. The Caliph, after doing justice to the repast, said to the Arab, "Brother, do you know who I am? No? Well then, know that I am one of the confidential servants of the Caliph."

The Caliph then asked for some wine, which was given him. After taking a cup or two, he again said: "Brother, do you know who I am? I am the Caliph." He then asked for more wine, but the Arab refused to give it to him, saying, "Friend, I am afraid that if I give thee more wine, thou wilt now claim to be a prophet." The Caliph laughed heartily at this reply. At this juncture some of his followers arrived at the tent, and recognizing the Caliph, made him obeisance, on observing which, the Arab was overwhelmed with confusion at the recollection of his impertinent reply to the Caliph; but the latter reassured him, and gave him costly presents.

32. A person claimed to be a prophet. The Caliph sent for him, and asked him whether he could perform any miracles. "Yes," said he, "if you demand anything from me, I can give it to you."

"Well then, give me a melon, though this is not the season for it," said the Caliph.

"Give me three days' grace," said the man.

"No! No! Not even an hour," said the Caliph.

"It is very strange," said the would-be-prophet, "that when God Himself, with all His omnipotence, does not make the melon within *three months*, you do not give me time for even *three days*!"

The Caliph laughed and let him go.

33. The poet Abu Dalâmeh wrote a panegyric ode upon the Caliph, and read it before him. The Caliph asked him what reward he would like to have in return. "Give me a hound," said Abu Dalâmeh. "A hound? why, that is nothing! Ask something else," said the Caliph. "Sire, I should like to have the hound first," was the reply.

A hound was accordingly ordered to be given to him. Abu Dalâmeh then said, "A hound would be useless for hunting purposes without a horse: I cannot follow the chase on foot."

The Caliph gave him a horse.

"Many thanks, Sire, for the horse," said Abu Dalâmeh, "but I have no one to attend to the animal."

The Caliph ordered that a slave should be given to the poet.

The latter then added: "When I return from the chase, I should like to have some one who can cook for me the game brought."

The Caliph gave him a female slave.

"But, Sire, where shall I lodge all your presents?" demanded the poet.

The Caliph ordered that a good capacious house should be purchased for the poet and be given to him.

"Now, Sire, I have but one difficulty left, and that is—how to feed all these people," said the poet.

The Caliph ordered that an acre of land grown over with date-trees should be given to him.

The poet then kissed the hand of the Caliph and went away.

34. A woman came to Kais-bin-Sa'ad and said: "I have to complain to you of the circumstance that there are no mice in my house." Kais smiled and said: "I understand; this complaint means that you have generally very little food in your house." He then sent to her house some quantity of bread, meat and butter.

35. A poet wrote an encomium on one of the Abbaside Caliphs, and read it to him. The Caliph said to him, "What reward would you prefer for your verse—would you have these three hundred dinars, or would you like to hear instead three wise sayings, each of which is worth a hundred thousand dinars?"

The poet, for the sake of flattering the Caliph, said he would give preference to the wise sayings.

"Well then, listen," said the Caliph; "the first bit of advice is, that when your socks get old and dirty put on new ones, because old socks spoil the effect of one's dress."

"Alas!" sighed the poet, "if this is your wise saying, I have simply thrown away a hundred dinars." The Caliph smiled and continued,— "The second advice is that when you apply *attar* to your beard, do not apply it on the under part, or your collar will become stained with the oil."

"Alas!" sighed the poet, "two hundred dinars have I lost."

The Caliph laughed, and was going to give utterance to the third saying, when the poet interposed, saying, "For God's sake, O King, keep the third philosophical gem in your own treasury, and give me instead the remaining hundred dinars, which I now prefer to a thousand wise sayings."

The Caliph laughed and gave him two hundred dinars in addition to the three hundred.

36. Abu Ayoob, the theologian, was once asked, "If one may have occasion to pray in a desert, and if he do not know the Cardinal points, in what direction should he turn his face?" "Towards his baggage," was the reply, "so that it may not be stolen."

37. Saiyâr, a famous wit among the Arabs, was blind. One day a coxcomb said to him, "God when He taketh away one blessing from a man giveth him another in compensation. Now in place of thine eyes what gift hath He given thee?" He replied, "The immunity from having to see thy cursed face!"

38. In the reign of Malik Zouzan, a man appeared, who claimed to be a prophet, saying that Angel Gabriel came to him frequently and talked to him. He was brought before the king, and the people wanted to have him killed. But the king ordered that he should be taken to a hospital, and be treated there for insanity.

After some time the king paid a visit to the hospital, and saw that the man had recovered, and had now the look of a sane man. So, with a smile the king asked him, "Does Gabriel come to you now?" "Yes," replied the man. "And what does he say to you?" He says, "Since you get here good bread, and rich broth, and sweet sherbets, take care not to go away from such a place."

39. A courtier once said to Bohlool, a buffoon of the court of Hâroon-ar-Rashid, "Rejoice, my friend for the Caliph has made thee a ruler over all asses and pigs."

"Is it so?" said Bohlool; "then why dost thou not make obeisance to me, for thou art one of my subjects?"

40. Caliph Hâroon once asked Bohlool whether he would like to be a Caliph. "No," replied Bohlool. "Why not?" asked Hâroon. "Because," replied Bohlool, "I have seen the funeral of three Caliphs, but you have not seen the funeral of a single Bohlool."

41. * Bohlool was enjoined by the Caliph to marry and live discreetly. The jester so far obeyed as to go through the nuptial ceremony; but as he was conducting his wife to her apartment, the uncourteous bridegroom suddenly paused, looked as if he were petrified, and declaring that he had never heard such a tumult in his life, took to his heels, and did not reappear for months. Meanwhile the deserted wife had procured a divorce, and then Bohlool made his re-entry at court. "So!" exclaimed the Caliph with an inquiring air. "Ay, ay!" cried the fool, "you would have done as I did. The tumult scared me away beyond the hills." "What tumult?" asked the Caliph. "Why," said Bohlool, "as my wife was entering the room, there came from her sounds as of a thousand voices. Amid them I could distinguish the cries of 'rent! taxes! doctors! sons! daughters! schooling! dress! silks! satins! muslins! money! more money! debt! imprisonment!' and 'Bohlool has drowned himself in the Caliph's bath!'—Therewith," added the jester, "terrified at the solemn warning, and wishing to avoid the profanity of plunging my person into Your Highness's bath, I fled till the danger was over and here am I, owing nothing, and disinclined to drown myself."

42. A desert Arab was present at the dinner table of one of the Caliphs. The dish of *faloodah* pleased him so much that he began

* From Nicholson's *Fun Series*.

to stuff himself with it, not caring to taste any of the other viands. One of those who were present said to him: "Don't eat too much of this *faloodah*, or it will be the death of you." The Arab withdrew his hand from the dish, remained thoughtful for a while, and then saying to the men present, "I bequeath to you the care of my family," again fell to the dish with renewed vigour.

43. A desert Arab, named Moosa, stole a purse, and then came to a mosque to offer up the usual prayers. The 'Pesh-nimâz' was at that time uttering this verse of the Koran—"What is there in thy hand, O Moosa?" On hearing this the Arab exclaimed: "I swear by God that thou art a conjurer"; and flinging away from him the purse, he immediately left the mosque.

44. On the day of the 'Eid of Sacrifice,' a desert Arab sacrificed a camel; and he boasted of his sacrifice wherever he went. On being remonstrated with for showing so much conceit, he replied, "*Subhân Allah!* God sacrificed but a single *goat*, that He substituted for Ishmael whom Abraham was going to sacrifice, and this sacrifice of the goat has been mentioned several times in the Koran. Should I not, therefore, mention as many times, a greater sacrifice that I have made—the sacrifice of a *camel*?"

54. In an assembly in the house of an Ameer, while all the others took part in the conversation, an Arab kept silent. The Ameer said to him: "Why have you been silent?"

He replied, "A man's income (*i.e.*, of wisdom) is through his ears, while whatever passes through the lips goes to enrich others." "You have spoken, and well spoken," said the Ameer.

46. An Arab stole some musk from the shop of a perfumer, and being caught, was brought before the Kâzi. He confessed his crime, whereupon the Kâzi asked him what led him to be guilty of such an act. The Arab replied: "I have come across a religious tradition that 'Whatsoever a man stealeth, that very thing shall appear in judgment against him and shall *hang from his neck* on the Day of Judgment.' As I am fond of perfumes, I thought it advisable to provide for me some perfume in the next world."

47. A Caliph had a roast lamb laid before him and was just commencing his dinner, when he saw a desert Arab approaching. The Caliph had him brought to his presence, and invited him to partake of the dish.

As the Arab was very hungry, he devoured his food greedily, whereupon the Caliph smiled and observed, "You are eating of the lamb in such a manner, that men might be led to infer you are taking your revenge on the animal for its father having once butted you with his horns." "And you," said the Arab, "eat of it so squeamishly, that one might imagine its mother had suckled you!"

The Caliph laughed and presented him with a thousand dinars.

48. A Bedouin loading a camel with two big sacks, and seating himself on the top of both, was going on a journey. On the way he overtook a man going barefoot in the same direction. After mutual greetings the latter enquired what he carried in those sacks. The Bedouin replied, "In one of my sacks is wheat, and in the other, sand." "And why did you load the camel with sand?" asked the man. The Bedouin said, "In order that there may be equal weight on both sides." The man said, "Throw out the sand and then into the empty sack pour half the wheat from the other sack, so that both the sacks may be lightened and the camel be relieved." "By Allah," said the Bedouin, "that did not occur to me! Verily thou art a most excellent and worthy sage."

Then seeing him footsore and wearied he gave him a seat on the camel. After some time he asked, "With such intellect and ability you must surely be a Vizier or a King?" "I am neither," said the sage, "I am of the commonalty. Look at my condition and my clothes."

The Bedouin asked, "How many camels have you?" "None." "Oxen then?" "None." "You must surely have much money in your house?"

When the man assured him that with all his wisdom he was not possessed of anything nor had he the means of paying for the night's food, the Bedouin was much astonished and exclaimed, "Go away from me lest your unluckiness infect me too. Go you in that direction and I will hasten in this, or if your road is forwards I will go back. Better for me to have one sack full of wheat and the other full of sand than to have a head full of devices which bring in nothing!"

49. An Arab gave evidence before a Kâzi in a certain suit. The defendant, wanting to have the evidence set at naught, said, "O Kâzi! this man notwithstanding that he is rich, has not yet performed the pilgrimage to Meccah. He is no true follower of the

Faith, and therefore little weight should be attached to his evidence." The Arab said, "This man lies. I made the pilgrimage in such and such a year." The Kâzi, in order to test him, said to the Arab, "If what you say be true, tell me where is 'Zamzam'?" The Arab replied, "The saintly old man is to be found sitting on the door of the 'Arafât'." "Nonsense!" said the Kâzi; "you ought to know, stupid ass, that 'Zamzam' is a well, and 'Arafât' is a desert without any doors." "That may be," replied the Arab, nothing daunted, "but when I made the pilgrimage, the well had not yet been dug, and Arafât was then a garden having gates."

50. An Arab lost a camel. He proclaimed loudly that he would give away the camel as a reward to any one who brought it to him. People said to him, "Of what use then is your taking so much trouble to get back the animal?" He replied, "Don't you know that the pleasure of finding a thing is greater than the value of the thing itself?"

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51. Fakhr-ud-dowlah, the ruler of Iraq-e-Ajam, was on his death succeeded to the throne by his son Majd-ud-dowlah; but the latter being a minor, the reins of administration were in the hands of his mother Saiyadah, a very shrewd woman. From the above province Sultan Mahmood Ghiznavi wanted to levy a tribute, and accordingly wrote a letter to Saiyadah, requiring her to submit to an annual tribute, and to send her son Majd-ud-dowlah to the royal court at Ghizni; and he threatened to overrun her province with a large army if she acted otherwise. Saiyadah received the envoy with due honours, and then sent him back with the following reply:—

"During the lifetime of my husband Fakhr-ud-dowlah I was afraid to make an enemy of Sultan Mahmood, who is a great king and a powerful warrior, and whose sway extends over Persia and Hindustan. But the death of my husband has removed the cause of my fear, for I know well that the great and renowned Sultan Mahmood will not send an army to attack a *woman*. If he be misguided enough to wage war with me, this much is certain that I will fight to the last; and then if I come off victorious, I shall be crowned with everlasting glory. On the other hand if Sultan Mahmood come out victorious in the strife, it will not redound to

his credit, for men will say he defeated an old woman! I am sure Sultan Mahmood is too wise and sensible to try to carry out the threat held out to me, and with this assurance I can very well rest at ease."

The Sultan, on reading this reply, was very much struck with the shrewdness of the queen, and vowed that as long as she was alive he would not invade her territory.

52. Sultan Mahmood Ghiznavi, when he was a boy, was one day strolling in a garden with a companion, Ahmad Husein Meimandi. Mahmood saw another person, somewhat in advance of them, who was likewise strolling in the garden. "Ahmad!" said Mahmood turning to his companion, "who could that man be, strolling yonder?"

"He seems to be a carpenter," replied Ahmad.

"And can you tell me his name?"

"I think his name also is Ahmad."

"Then you know him."

"No. I have never seen him before this."

"Then what led you to suppose that his name is Ahmad and that he is a carpenter?"

"When you called me by name, I saw him turn as if to reply. This led me to conclude that *his* name also must be Ahmad. And I have been remarking that he pays no heed to the various fruit trees, or to the flowers: only large trees, that can be cut up into timber, engage his attention. From this I infer that he must be a carpenter."

"This is indeed surprising! But if you can tell me now what he has eaten to-day, I shall have a higher opinion of your powers of observation."

"He has eaten either honey, or some sweetmeat."

Mahmood then called the man to him, and asked, "Do you know this youth?"

"No!" replied the man.

"Let me ask you two or three questions," said Mahmood. "In the first place, what is your name? In the second place, what is your profession? And lastly, what have you eaten to-day?"

The man replied, "My name is Ahmad; I am a carpenter; and I have eaten honey to-day."

Mahmood was astonished. After dismissing the man he asked his companion, "How did you guess that he had eaten honey?"

Ahmad: "He was constantly wiping his mouth, and smacking his lips, and driving away the flies that frequently annoyed him by hovering about his lips. I judged from this that he must have eaten something sweet to-day."

53. Three pious and learned brothers were journeying together. They came across a camel-driver, who asked them whether they had seen his lost camel. One of the brothers asked whether the animal was blind of one eye; another brother asked whether the animal had lost a front tooth; while the third brother asked whether the animal had received some injury in one of its feet. All of these questions the camel-driver answered in the affirmative. The brothers then informed him that, if he searched for the camel in the direction whence they had come, he would most probably get back his camel.

The camel-driver went in the direction pointed out, but his search was not successful; so he turned back, and overtaking the brothers, reported to them his want of success.

Again the brothers asked him, one after another, whether the camel was not loaded with honey on one side and corn on the other, whether there was not a woman riding on the camel, and whether the woman was not far advanced in pregnancy. The camel-driver acknowledged that such was the case, and showed his conviction that the brothers very well knew where the camel was. But the brothers said that they had not even seen the animal. The camel-driver would not believe these words and accused them of robbery; and so all of them went to the ruler of the province to have his adjudication in the matter. The latter after making preliminary enquiries had the brothers sent to jail on suspicion.

A day or two afterwards, the camel-driver came across the camel, who had been straying in the woods, and the innocence of the brothers having been thus proved beyond a doubt, they were released. The governor, however, before parting from them, requested them to inform him how they were able to give all the indications of the lost camel, without having seen it. They replied, they all of them possessed keen powers of observation, and that while walking on the road, they had seen the footprints of a camel. As the impression of one of the feet was all along very faint, they

were led to conclude that the animal must have been lame. Again, the herbage on one side only of the road was devoured by the animal, which led them to the conclusion that the camel must have lost one eye. And on the grass and on the leaves browsed by the animal there were indications that the animal had lost its front tooth. As to the load of the animal, they were led to the belief that it consisted of honey and corn, from seeing bees and ants on opposite sides of the road, busy in removing something that had evidently fallen from the load. Again, the person riding on the back of the camel had alighted for some purpose as appeared from human footprints near a certain place. And the size of the footprints, as well as a stray lock of hair lying on the ground, had convinced them that the rider was a woman. They had gathered that she must have been far advanced in pregnancy, from the circumstance that in rising from the ground she had made use of her hand to support herself, as was apparent from the marks of the palms of her hands on the ground.

On hearing this explanation the governor, who could not but admire their powers of observation, was very well pleased, and after giving them suitable presents allowed them to go.

54. Sultan Mahmood Ghiznavi, once reclining with his head on the lap of his court-fool Talhak, asked him, "In what relation art thou to pimps?" "Their pillow," promptly retorted Talhak.

55. Some wags stole the shoes of Talhak from a mosque, and threw them before the entrance of a Christian church. When Talhak found the shoes, he exclaimed in wonder, "Glory be to God! What a marvel that I myself am a Musalman but my shoes are Christians!"

56. Sultan Mahmood used to give his courtiers a robe of honour on the occasion of the Eid festival. Once he ordered that to Talhak should be given as a present the pack-saddle of an ass.

On the Eid day other men attended the Court clad in their robes, but Talhak came with the pack-saddle on his shoulders, and said, "My masters, see in what high esteem I am held by His Majesty the Sultan. He has ordered robes to be given to you from the royal wardrobe, but me he has shown the special favour of arraying in the dress doffed from his own person!"

57. Ishmael bin Muhammad, a learned man of his time, went to Naishapoor. He was much pleased with its climate, and was charmed with its water-canals, but the ways of the people he did not like. The Khalif asked him to send a report on the climate and the people of Naishapoor. He wrote in reply, "Naishapoor would be a lovely place if the water that runs underground were to flow above, and the people who are over the earth were to go under."

58.¹ When Bajazet, after his defeat, was carried into the presence of Taimur Lang (Taimur the Lame, vulgarly called Tamerlane) on perceiving that Bajazet had but one eye, Taimur burst into loud laughter. The Turk who could ill brook any incivility, said fiercely, "You may deride my misfortunes, Taimur, but remember they might have happened to yourself. The disposal of kingdoms is in the hand of God, and their state depends on His will." Taimur replied with equal haughtiness: "I agree with your observation. I did not laugh at your misfortunes, but at a reflection that just occurred to my mind—how little value thrones and sceptres possess in the judgment of God, who has taken a kingdom from a man with *one eye* to give it to another with *one leg*."

59. Ameer Ali, a courtier of Shah Rukh Mirza, used to lend money to the needy, and in every case the date of repayment was to be the day on which the King died. This came to the ear of the King, who enquired, "What cause have you to wish me ill that you make such terms for repayment?" "Far from wishing you ill," said the Ameer, "I am the foremost of your well-wishers, for all my debtors pray for your long life, so that the day of repayment may be as far off as possible."

The King was pleased with the reply and presented the Ameer with a robe of honour.

60.² The emperor of Constantinople, Mahmood the Fifth, the great rival of Nadir Shah, desiring to humble the vanity of that conqueror, and knowing he valued himself more on his superior bodily power and stentorian voice than on any other qualities, selected, as an envoy to Persia, a porter of extraordinary personal strength and most powerful lungs. The envoy had merely charge

1. From Nicholson's *Fun series*.

2. From Malcolm's *Sketches of Persia*.

of a letter, which he was told to deliver in person to the king, to require an answer, and return. The fame of this remarkable diplomatist preceded him; and Nadir was advised not to receive him as his deputation was deemed an insult. But curiosity overcame all other considerations, and he was introduced one day when there was a very full court. When the Turk approached the throne, Nadir, assuming his fiercest look, and exerting his voice to the utmost, said: "What do you desire of me?" Almost all started, and the hall vibrated to the sound; but the envoy, with an undaunted air, and in a voice of thunder which made Nadir's appear like the treble of a child, exclaimed: "Take that letter, and give me an answer that I may return to my master." The court was in amazement; all eyes were turned on Nadir, whose frowning countenance gradually relaxed in a smile, and turning to his courtiers, he said: "After all, the fellow certainly has merit." He was outdone, but he could not help respecting in another the qualities he valued in himself. Nadir is stated to have retorted the intended insult, by saying to the envoy, when he gave him leave to depart: "Tell your master, I am glad to find that he has one *man* in his dominions, and that he has had the good sense to send him here, that we may be satisfied of the fact."

61.³ One day Shah Abbas the Great was riding with the celebrated Meer Muhammad Bâqar Dâmâd on his right and the equally famed Sheikh Bahâ-ud-din 'Âmilî on his left. The King desired to discover if there lurked any secret envy, or jealousy, in the hearts of those two learned priests. Turning to Meer Muhammad Bâqar, whose horse was prancing and capering, he observed, "What a dull brute Sheikh Bahâ-ud-din is riding! He cannot make the animal keep pace with us."—"The wonder is how the horse moves at all," said the Moollah, "when we consider what a load of learning and knowledge he has upon his back."

Abbas, after some time, turned round to Sheikh Bahâ-ud-din, and said to him, "Did you ever see such a prancing animal as that which Meer Muhammad Bâqar rides? Surely that is not the style for a horse to go in who carries a grave Moollah."—"Your Majesty will, I am assured," said the Sheikh, "forgive the horse, when you reflect on the just right he has to be proud of his rider."

3. From Malcolm's *History of Persia*.

The monarch bent his head forward on his saddle, and returned thanks to the Almighty for the singular blessing He had bestowed upon his reign, of two wise and pious men, who, though living at a Court, had minds untainted by envy and hatred.

62.⁴ It is related of Kareemkhan, a Shah of Persia, that one day, after being harassed by a long attendance in public, hearing causes, he was about to retire, when he was arrested by the cries of a stranger, who, rushing forward, called aloud for redress.

"Who are you?" said the Shah. "I am a merchant, and have been robbed of all I possessed while I slept." "And why did you sleep?" demanded the monarch in an impatient tone. "Because I made a mistake," replied the trader immediately; "I thought that you were awake." The irritation of the monarch vanished in a moment. Turning to the vazier, he bade him pay the man's losses from the royal treasury. "It is our business," he added, "to recover, if we can, the property from the robbers."

63.⁵ The avarice of the Shah, Aga Mahommed, sometimes betrayed him into awkward and even ludicrous predicaments. On one occasion he himself disclosed a conspiracy to defraud his nobles. When he was riding out with some courtiers, a mendicant met the party, and the king, apparently struck with his distress, ordered a large alms to be given to him. The example was, of course, followed by all, and the beggar obtained a considerable sum. That night the sovereign's impatience betrayed his secret:—"I have been cheated," said he to his minister; "that scoundrel of a mendicant whom you saw this morning, not only promised to return me my own money, but to give me half of what he should receive through its means from others!" Horsemen were instantly ordered in pursuit; but the fellow took care not to be caught, and the courtiers laughed in their sleeves at his Majesty's disappointment.

64. One day Ibn-e-Jouzi was on the pulpit, delivering a sermon. His audience, consisting of both Shiahs and Sunnis, wanted to know which sect the preacher belonged to. They therefore put to him this question—"Whom do you consider to be the noblest of men, next to the Prophet?" He replied, "من بته في بته" which

4. From Fraser's *Persia and Afghanistan*.

5. Do. do.

may mean "He whose daughter is in his house," thereby alluding to *Abubekr* whose daughter was married to Mahomed; or it may mean, "He in whose house is his daughter," thereby alluding to *Ali*, who was the husband of the Prophet's daughter. The people were still left in doubt: the Sunnis thought he meant *Abubekr*, and the Shiahhs thought he meant *Ali*. So he was again asked—"How many persons do you regard as the true successors of the Prophet?" *Ibn-e-Jouzi* replied, "*Four, four, four.*" But the people were unable to understand whether he meant four successors only, whom the Sunnis recognized, or twelve successors, as the Shiahhs believed.

65.⁶ The celebrated poet Sheikh Saadi and a contemporary poet Humâm Tabreezi met accidentally in a bath at Tabreez, without knowing each other; but entering into conversation, Humâm became aware of the birth-place of his companion, and at the same time declared himself a native of the city where they then were. A trial of wit took place, when Humâm observed that in Tabreez the Shirazees were more numerous than the dogs in the streets, whereupon Saadi retorted that the reverse was the case in Shiraz, "for there," said he, "the Tabreezees are held to be *less than dogs.*" The double meaning involved in the Sheikh's reply nonplussed Humâm. He rallied, however, and observing the baldness of his companion—a personal peculiarity very common among the Sheikh's countrymen—"How comes it," said he, presenting the round-shaped ewer used in ablutions, and turned upside down; "whence comes it that all you Shirazees have heads like this?"

"And how comes it," retorted Saadi, presenting his own vessel and pointing to its empty cavity, "that all you Tabreezees have heads empty like this?"

On returning from the bath they entered into some further discourse, in consequence of which Humâm recognised in the stranger the celebrated Sheikh Saadi, and lavished upon him both kindness and honours.

66. A vain and stupid man, gorgeously arrayed and mounted on a superb horse, accosted Sa'adi and asked him if he had seen anything like his accoutrements. Sa'adi replied, "It reminds me of an ugly scrawl in golden ink."

6. From Fraser's *Persia and Afghanistan*.

67. The poet Majd-i-Hamgar, who had married an old woman, left his wife in Yezd, and came to Isfahân, where he settled for good. His wife, not being able to bear the anguish of separation, followed him to Isfahân shortly afterwards. Majd was informed of this circumstance by a pupil of his, who said, "I bring you good tidings—your wife has come down to your house." "Oh!" said Majd, "had the *house* come down on *her* that would have been good tidings indeed!"

These words of Majd were reported to his wife, who, when she saw him, began reproaching him, saying, "Is this the way one greets his wife? Have you not the example of others before you? Remember that there have been men before our time, and how chivalrously they—" "Stop!" interposed Majd, "there have been men before *my* time, certainly; but I doubt very much whether there have been any men before *your* time," alluding to her old age.

68. Baisunqer Mirza was a patron of the poet Mowlânâ Lutfi, who once wrote in his praise a panegyric ode, which was an exact parody of a *Qasidah* of the poet Muzaffar Hirawî, wherein the word '*bâgh*' (or 'garden') forms the burden of the rhyme.

The Mirza asked Lutfi to parody another *Qasidah* of Muzaffar, wherein the burden of the rhyme is '*sarâi*' (or 'mansion'). Lutfi replied, "I must see first what fruit his *garden* yields me and then I shall think of entering into his *mansion*."

The Mirza laughed, and taking the hint, gave him a good reward.

69. An impostor, clad in the garb of a religious man, arrived at the village of Jâm (the birthplace of the celebrated poet Jâmy), and, by his pretended asceticism and devotional life, gained the favour and confidence of the people; so much so, that he was appointed to the post of the Imâm, which, till then, was in the hands of Jâmy. The latter warned the people against being led away by the outward devotion of this Sheikh, of whom they knew nothing, and who appeared to be devoid of learning; but his words were ascribed to jealousy, and some of the people were even bold enough to suggest that, if Jâmy had so much confidence in his own powers, he had better enter into an intellectual discussion with the stranger. This the poet Jâmy agreed to, and accordingly, the discussion was appointed to take place in a mosque at a certain time. Both the rivals presented themselves on the appointed day, and it

was decided that the Sheikh should ask the first question, to which Jâmy should reply.

The Sheikh turning to Jâmy asked, "Can you tell me the meaning of the Arabic phrase لا ادري?"

"I do not know," replied Jâmy.

Now the very meaning of the phrase is "I do not know"; but the people, who could not boast of any Arabic scholarship, were led away with the notion that Jâmy had acknowledged his defeat by confessing that he did not know the meaning of the phrase. Accordingly, they raised cheers for the Sheikh; and ere Jâmy could utter a single word in explanation, he was hooted out of the assembly.

Jâmy, who was thus baffled by a trick on the part of the adversary, after two or three days gave out that he was going on a journey, and went out of the town. Some of his followers and disciples went out along with him. Outside the town, Jâmy turned to his followers, and said, "One of you should go to the Sheikh and after informing him of your intention to go on a journey, request him to give you a single hair out of his holy beard, so that it might be preserved as a charm against the dangers of the road."

This was done, and the hair was brought to Jâmy, but the incident got wind, and the doors of the Sheikh were thronged by persons of all classes, anxious to possess a single hair of this beard of miraculous properties. The Sheikh good-naturedly complied, but in a few days he was left without a single hair on his chin; and now, far from looking a venerable man, he cut a very sorry figure. So the people soon lost faith in him, and began to see certain defects which they had not remarked in him so long. Accordingly he was driven out, and Jâmy was recalled and reinstated in his former place.

70. A poet wrote a very wretched ode, and read it to the celebrated poet Jâmy. He then conceitedly added, "I want to have it hung up on the gates of the city, so that it may become known to all." "Ay," said Jâmy, "but how will the people know the poem is yours, unless you too are hung up there along with it?"

71. Moulânâ Kutbuddeen asked a squint-eyed man whether it was true that squinting men saw double. "Yes," replied the man; "and in proof of it I may say that you appear to me to be a *quadruped*."

The Moulânâ was dumbfounded by this reply.

72. A person fell from a terrace on the head of Moulânâ Kutbuddeen who was passing through the street at the time, and broke the Moulânâ's neck. Kutbuddeen was taken home, and laid on his bed, where his friends came to see him. "How do you feel yourself?" asked they. He replied with a smile: "What a perverse fate is mine, that another man falls from a terrace, and it is I who get my neck broken!"

73. Moulânâ Kutbuddeen once went to see a great man who was ill, and asked him what was the matter with him. "I have been suffering from fever, and pain in the neck," replied the man; "but, thank God! the fever is 'broken up' and now it is the neck only that gives me pain." "Cheer up!" said the Moulânâ, "that will get 'broken' too." And with these words he departed, leaving the patient in doubt, whether he had spoken of the neck or the pain.

74. Moulânâ Sa'eed Multani had a very dark skin. In his youth he was the disciple of Moulânâ Kutbuddeen Allâmah. One night Sa'eed accidentally upset an inkstand on his turban, and the next morning he attended the *Madresah* with the same turban on. This attracted the attention of the master and the pupils and he was asked how the turban came to be soiled. Ere he could reply Moulânâ Kutbuddeen interposed with the sly remark, "The poor fellow must have wiped his perspiration with it!"

75. A poet showed a poem of his to a critic. The poem was full of plagiarisms, almost all lines having been stolen from other poets. The critic, after reading the poem said: "You have brought me a wonderful caravan of camels tied together; let any one but untie the cord wherewith they are tied, and each of them will return to its original master."

76. A Khwajah fell ill. A friend of his, a poet, did not even once come to see him during the period of his protracted illness. When the Khwajah recovered, he went to the poet, and reproached him for not having come even once to inquire after his health during his illness. The poet replied: "Excuse me, my friend, I was serving you in another way—I was engaged in writing an elegy in anticipation of your death!"

77. A ruler of a province once wrote some verses, and asked a poet to express his opinion regarding them. The poet remarked

that the verses were execrable, which so much enraged the Ameer that he ordered the poet to be taken to prison, whence he was released after a month.

Again, after some time, the Ameer wrote some verses, and asked the poet's opinion regarding them. The poet remained silent for a while, and then said: "Please order your men to take me to prison again."

78. A poet took some of his verses to a critic, and asked what he thought of them. The critic said that the verses were very bad, whereupon the poet began to abuse him. The critic merely smiled and said: "This prose of yours is better than your verse at any rate."

79. Once the poet Mulla Husein Kâshi recited before another poet Meer Syedi Tâftah the opening couplet of a *Ghazal* of his. The latter said, "This couplet of yours has nothing in it that can move me."

"Move you?" replied the offended poet, "why, for that purpose you require a donkey's goad and not verses!"

80. A poet went to an Arab ruler of a province, and recited before him a poem composed in his praise. The latter asked, "What is your desire?" "Do you leave the wishing to me?" asked the poet. "Yes," said the ruler. The poet said, "Give me a hundred thousand *dirhems*." The ruler said, "This is too much. What is the least figure that you can name?" "A hundred *dirhems*," said the poet. "Why is there such an enormous difference between the two amounts?" asked the ruler. The poet answered, "When you left it to me to fix the sum, what I took into consideration was *your* rank, and when you told me to reduce the amount, I took the measure of my own position." "By God!" said the ruler, "we will not undervalue ourselves"; and he ordered the hundred thousand *dirhems* to be given to the poet.

81. A learned man, who had a very ugly face, was once asked whether he was ever put out of countenance.

"Yes," said he, "once a woman caught hold of my hand, and took me to the shop of a worker in metals, and then went away. I asked the master of the shop what the woman meant by this conduct, and he replied, 'The woman has long since asked me to make for her an image of the Devil, but having no idea of what his

sable majesty looked like, I asked her to supply me with a model, which she promised to do; and accordingly she brought *you* to me to-day.' Well, that was the day on which I felt heartily ashamed of myself."

82. A man with a very ugly face was once praying, asking forgiveness for his sins, and requesting God to exempt him from the tortures of hell. A person overhearing him said, "Friend, how canst thou be so uncharitable? Hast thou the heart to withhold from the fires of Hell even such an ugly mug as thine?"

83. A man with a very large nose got married. One day he boasted, in his wife's presence, of his good qualities, mentioning specially his patience and forbearance.

"I know it, I know it," said his wife; "for had you not had these qualities, you could not have carried such a big nose for so many years."

84. A person was exceedingly ugly. Once he was asked how he could bear to live, having such an ugly face. He replied, "Why should I not find pleasure in my existence? *I* never have occasion to see my own face: the annoyance of it is to *others* who see it!"

85. An ugly man fell ill, and sent for a doctor. The doctor, on examining him, said, "If you can manage to vomit, you will soon be well." The man replied, "I cannot do it, though I have been trying to, so long." A wag, who was present, exclaimed, "If you but see your face in the mirror, it will immediately turn your stomach."

86. An ugly and vixenish woman fell sick. She said to her husband: "If I die, how will you be able to live without me?" He replied: "That is not the worst of it. What puzzles *me* is—how shall I be able to live if you *do not* die?"

87. A wit got married. On seeing the bride's face for the first time after the marriage ceremony (according to the usual Persian custom), he was exceedingly disappointed to find her very ugly. One day the wife said to him: "You have many brothers and other male relatives; tell me in whose presence I should always appear veiled, and in whose presence I may appear with uncovered face." The husband replied: "Oh, you need not mind showing your face to any one else, provided you always appear veiled before *me*."

88. A very ugly man had a very handsome wife. Once she said to him, "I am convinced that both of us will go to Heaven." "How can you say that?" asked he. "Because," said she, "you are always giving thanks to God whenever you see my handsome face, while as for me the sight of your ugly features makes me resigned to His will, and with patience I bear the daily affliction. And it is said in the scriptures that the thankful and the patient shall go to Heaven!"

89. A wag got married to an old woman. On the next morning some friends asked, "What sort of woman is your wife?" "Oh," replied he, with a merry twinkle, "she is like the narcissus!" "How?" asked they. Said he, "The head is white, the face yellow and the stalk slender!"

*Stories of Mulla Nasruddin.**

90. Mulla Nasruddin, the half-wit, once observed to a group of friends that no appreciable difference could be found between the strength that he had possessed in the prime of his youth and the strength that he had in old age. They asked him what led him to believe so. He replied "In my house there is a large stone mortar, which I could not move an inch with all my strength when I was young. Now, too, that I am old, I find that I cannot move the stone. It is evident, therefore, that my strength has undergone no change since the days of my youth."

91. Mulla Nasruddin once saw in a dream that a person was offering him nine dinars, and he himself was saying, "O generous man, make it ten dinars, for that will be a good round sum."

At this point he awoke, and repenting his greed in asking for more, he again closed his eyes, and stretching out his palm, exclaimed: "Well let me have even the nine dinars; I will accept them."

92. On the one occasion Mulla Nasruddin was invited to a dinner at a friend's house. A dish of boiled fowl was placed before him. As the fowl was not thoroughly cooked, he partook of

* Most of the stories attributed to the Mulla which appear in the Persian book with the above title seem to be from Arabic and other sources. The prototype of Nasruddin was the Arab half-wit Jochi.

the gravy only, and said to his friend: "Please have this fowl well cooked for to-morrow, when I will again be your guest." On the next day the same dish was placed before him, but he found the fowl as tough as before. He, therefore, partook of the gravy, and then placing the fowl in front of himself began his prostrations and genuflexions as in prayers. "What are you doing?" asked the host. The Mulla replied: "I am invoking a blessing on the fowl's soul, for the flesh that is placed twice over the fire and is not cooked, cannot be the flesh of an ordinary fowl, but that of some prophet or saint amongst them!"

93. One day Mulla Nasruddin said to his wife: "Bring me a bit of cheese, for it gives tone to the stomach and excites the appetite." She replied that there was no cheese in the house. "Never mind," said the husband; "so much the better; for when I come to think of it, it causes flatulence and weakens the gums." "Now, which of your two opinions is the correct one?" asked the wife. "If you have got the cheese, the first one," replied the husband; "but if you have it not, the second one."

94. Once Mulla Nasruddin was heard by a neighbour praying to God to bestow on him one thousand dinars and swearing that he would not accept any sum less than that amount even by one dinar. The neighbour who was a Jew, for the sake of fun took a purse containing 999 dinars, and threw it into the Mulla's house through a window, saying in a disguised voice: "Pick up this sum, my faithful servant!"

The Mulla, gratified to find that his prayers were accepted, and the boon granted so promptly, took up the purse, and counted the contents.

Finding that there was one dinar short of the sum asked for, he said, "They have perhaps made some mistake in counting, or perhaps the coin is not in stock in the Celestial treasury at present, and I shall be paid hereafter." And with these words he locked up the purse in a box. The Jew who had not looked for this *contretemps* became very angry, and going to his neighbour's door knocked very loudly for admittance. The door was opened by the Mulla, who inquired what the matter was.

"Restore me my money that you just received," said the Jew.

"The money has been sent by God," said the Mulla, "and the amount is one dinar less than the sum asked for by me; but I am sure He will pay me the deficit sooner or later."

"You fool! what nonsense are you talking?" said the Jew.

"Oh, as to that, any one can see who is acting like a fool," retorted the Mulla coolly.

"But it was I who threw the money into your room by way of a joke," urged the Jew.

"I cannot believe it," said the Mulla.

"Well, then, come to the Kâzi, and let him judge between us."

"I have no objection to this course, but I have no dress suitable for the Kâzi's presence, and besides I have some pain in the legs. Unless you give me your coat to put on, and your ass to ride on, I cannot go with you to the Kâzi."

The Jew was obliged to lend him his coat and his ass, and the two men appeared before the Kâzi. The Jew laid his complaint, and when he had finished, the Mulla said that all the statements of the Jew were false, adding: "O Kâzi, this man is a villain whose business is to annoy the believers in the true Faith, and extort money from them by these and other means. He will perhaps swear, I doubt not, that the coat that I have on, and the ass on which I came to this Court also belong to him." The Jew, taken aback at this fresh thrust from the Mulla, exclaimed: "And did I not lend thee these articles even now, just before we came here?"

The Mulla merely smiled, shrugged his shoulders, and looked significantly at the Kâzi.

The Kâzi, who had up to this point heard the case patiently, was now exasperated at this fresh instance of what he deemed to be the rascality of the Jew, and had him bastinadoed and driven from his presence.

So the poor Jew, who wanted to have a joke at the expense of the Mulla, lost not only his money but his coat and his ass into the bargain; and the simple (!) Mulla went away rejoicing at the Jew's discomfiture.

95. A person came to Mulla Nasruddin and asked for the loan of his ass in order to go to a certain town, promising to return

the animal within a week. The Mulla expressed his regret at not being able to gratify him, as the ass had already been lent to another person. At this juncture the braying of the ass was heard from the stable, whereupon the man who had come to borrow the animal exclaimed: "How is this? Whose is that voice if not your ass's?" The Mulla quietly retorted: "And would you, brother, put more faith in the words of an ass than in those of a venerable man like me?"

96. A learned man came to the city wherein lived Mulla Nasruddin, and asked the people whether there was any man in the city who could try conclusions with him in philosophical discussions. The Mulla was named by some wags present. At this juncture the Mulla came up riding on his ass, and being informed of the desire of the learned man to enter into a discussion with him, said to him: "Question me on whatever subject you like."

The philosopher asked: "Where is the centre of the earth?"

"Just where I am standing," said the Mulla; "if you do not believe it, measure the earth yourself."

The philosopher, marvelling at the reply, put the next question: "How many stars are there in the firmament?"

"As many as there are hairs all over the body of my ass," replied the Mulla; "if you do not believe it, count them."

The bewildered philosopher now put the third question: "How many hairs have I in my beard?"

"Just as many as there are hairs in the tail of my ass," replied the Mulla; "if you want a proof of it, pluck out one hair from your beard and I shall do the same with the tail of my ass, and we can go on doing this till the whole of your beard is plucked out, and you will find that I have said the truth."

The philosopher took to his heels.

97. Once Mulla Nasruddin took three pomegranates to an 'Ameer as a present and received some reward in return. On another occasion he wanted to take twenty turnips as a present to the 'Ameer but was dissuaded by a friend, who recommended him to take figs instead. Accordingly, the Mulla took some figs to the 'Ameer, but the latter not being in good humour at the time, ordered his servants to pelt him with the very figs he had brought,

and to drive him off from his presence. The Mulla, every time that a fig struck him, loudly called down blessings on his friend, upon which the Ameer asked him what he meant. The Mulla replied: "I intended to bring you a present of some turnips, but thanks to the advice of my friend, I brought figs instead. Had I not done so I should have had my head broken."

The Ameer laughed and gave him some reward.

98. One day the wife of Mulla Nasruddin washed his cloak, and, after wringing it, hung it on a peg in the wall, to dry. When the Mulla came home, it being somewhat dark, he took the cloak for a thief, and bringing his bow and arrow from an adjoining room, let fly the arrow at the supposed depredator.

He then called out to his wife: "Come and see, I have killed a thief with a single discharge of my arrow." His wife came, and seeing what he had done, held up the cloak to him, and said: "You stupid fellow! How long am I to put up with your follies?" "Be quiet, woman," said the husband; "you ought to thank God that I was not in the cloak at the time of my shooting the arrow, or you would have been a widow!"

99. A beggar came to the house of the Mulla, and seeing him on the terrace beckoned to him to come down. The Mulla came down, when the beggar said to him: "For the sake of God give me something." The Mulla, concealing his displeasure, asked him to come upstairs, and, taking him to the terrace, said: "I swear by God I haven't anything that I can willingly give thee in charity."

The beggar fumed and said: "Why did you not say so downstairs? Why did you bring me up here?" "In order to requite you for your courtesy in calling me down," retorted the Mulla.

100. Once Mulla Nasruddin invited some friends to dinner, and took them with him to his house. Leaving them in the front chamber, he went to his wife, and said: "I have invited some friends to dine with me to-day. Have we sufficient food in the house?" "No, we have not," replied the wife. "Then go and inform my friends who are waiting in the front room that I am not at home."

The wife did as she was directed to do. The guests said: "What words are these? He came with us, and we saw him go inside even just now!" The Mulla replied from within: "This house has two doors; perhaps he got out by the other door!"

101. On a moonlit night Mulla Nasruddin saw the image of the moon in a well. Said he: "The poor little moon has fallen into the well. Let me take him out." So he procured a piece of rope, and attaching a hook at one extremity, let it down into the well. After moving about the hook in the water for some time, he found that the hook had become fast to something, and he began to pull. But the hook having caught on a large stone at the bottom of the well, he was not able to make the rope come up. At last the rope, which was rather old and worn out, gave way, and the man was flung on his back. He now saw the moon high up in the heavens, whereupon he exclaimed, "Thank God that after all the trouble I have succeeded in bringing out the poor fellow from the well!"

102. "I hear your neighbour has some festivity at his house to-morrow," said a friend to Mulla Nasruddin.

"It may be so, but I do not see how that concerns *me*."

"But he is going to invite *you* also."

"And pray, how does that concern *you*?" *

103. One day Mulla Nasruddin brought home two fowls. He had them fried in butter, and leaving them in a covered vessel, he went out to invite his friends. In the meantime the wife took out the fried fowls, and placed in their stead two live ones.

When the Mulla returned with his guests, he went to the vessel wherein he had placed the fowls, and took out the lid. No sooner had he done so than, to the astonishment of the Mulla, the fowls jumped out and ran away. The Mulla with an awe-struck face turned towards heaven, and said: "O Lord, Thou hast in Thy mercy given life to these fowls, and I am thankful that I have been allowed to witness this miracle. But—tell me, O Lord, who is going to pay me for the cost of the fowls, and of the butter employed in frying them!"

104. Once Mulla Nasruddin went to pay a visit to a sick man, suffering from a severe headache. He turned to the members of the family, and said to them by way of consolation, "Don't be

* This is similar to an anecdote of Frederick the Great. An officer once complained to him of the conduct of another officer, upon which the king observed: "Well, that is none of *my* business." "But he has spoken disrespectfully of *you* also," said the officer. "Well, that is none of *your* business, sir," rejoined the king.

disheartened, whenever a man reaches this stage of illness, his death is not far off; so you will shortly be released from the trouble of tending and nursing him!"

105. On another occasion the Mulla went to the house of a man, of whose serious illness he had heard the day before. Taking for granted that the man must have been dead by this time, he began to offer condolence to the members of the man's family.

"But he is not *dead*!" said they, looking fiercely at him. "Oh, you need not be down-hearted about that," said the Mulla, "*Insha Allah* (may God grant it!), he will die soon!"

106. On another occasion the Mulla went to see a sick acquaintance, and asked him what he was suffering from. The man replied, "I am suffering from an acute attack of lumbago." The Mulla gravely shook his head and observed: "Let us hope for the best! My father also had an attack of the disease which terminated fatally; his death happened very soon after the attack. If you have any will to make, or any wish to be gratified, tell it to me."

The sick man called his son to his bedside, and said, "I give thee solemn injunctions—to turn this fellow out of doors, and never to allow the wretch to approach my bed."

107. Once the Mulla was caught in a hail-storm. As he had no covering on his head at the time, and was also bald, the hail stones caused much injury to his head. Much incensed, he rushed into his house, and bringing out a large pestle, he turned it towards the sky, saying, "What valour is there in cracking the skull of a poor fellow like me? If thou art manly, let me see, break the head of this pestle!"

108. Once the Mulla borrowed of his neighbour a large cooking pot, and returned it the next day, with a small cooking pot inside. The neighbour said, "This small pot is not mine." He replied, "This small one is the child to which your pot gave birth last night in our house." The neighbour was pleased, and received the two vessels with a smile.

A few days later, the Mulla again borrowed the pot, but this time took no steps to return it. When the neighbour demanded the vessel he said, "May God give you long life! Your pot, I am sorry to say, died in our house!" The neighbour said, "Nonsense, man, how can a pot die?" The Mulla retorted, "In the same way that it can give birth!" and quietly walked away.

109. One day Mulla Nasruddin, in a mosque, ascended the pulpit, and addressed his audience: "Oh children of the Faithful! Do you know what I am going to say?" They answered: "No." "Well then," he replied, "it is of no use for me to waste my time on so stupid a set of people." Next Friday he again mounted the pulpit and inquired: "O true Mussalmans, know ye what I am going to say?" "We do," said they. "Then," he continued, "there is no need for me to speak." The third time his audience thought of catching him, and on his putting the usual question they replied, "Some of us do, and some of us do not." "Well then," replied he, "let those who do know tell those who do not."

Stories of Fools and Half-wits.

110. Joohi was once brought before a Kâzi by a person to whom he owed a hundred *direms*.

"Have you any witness?" asked the Kâzi of the suitor.

"No," said the suitor.

"Well then, let the defendant be put on his oath to tell the truth," said the Kâzi.

"But," exclaimed the suitor, "no reliance can be placed on his oath; he is a man who can swear to anything."

"O Kâzi of the Faithful," here interposed Joohi, "if no reliance is to be placed on my oath, well, there is in the mosque situated in our street an Imâm, who is very holy and virtuous; let him be called for, and let him be given the oath in my place, to satisfy this man."

111. A schoolmaster was asked whether *he* was older or his brother. He replied—"At present, I am older than he by one year but after that period, his age will be equal to mine!"

112. An inhabitant of Baghdad went to Kazwin. As his stay at the latter place was prolonged beyond what he had originally intended it to be, he wrote a letter to his family, mentioning everything about himself and his affairs. But as he could not find any messenger, he determined to take the letter himself to Baghdad. Accordingly he took up the letter and arrived with it at his house, but stayed outside the door. The members of his family were glad to see him, and asked him to enter the house;

but this he would not do, saying, "My object in coming here was merely to bring this letter;" and with these words he left again, leaving the letter with them.

113. A person from Hajâz had come to Shiraz. On the eve of the first day of the month of Ramazân (the month of fasting), he saw the new moon which heralds the beginning of every month. The sight of it exasperated our sage, who said angrily to the moon,—"Hast thou come back to torment and annoy mankind by obliging them to keep fasts? May God kill me, if I do not avoid thy malign influence by departing immediately from this city!"

114. A man, who was remarkable for his stupidity, once purchased an antelope for eleven direms. He was taking the animal home, when he encountered on the road an acquaintance, who asked him how many direms he had given for the animal. The fool outstretched his palms, and drew out his tongue, to indicate eleven. But as he had lost hold of the antelope during this pantomime, the animal escaped.

115. Two fools were companions in a journey. One of them said to the other: "Come let us amuse ourselves by *wishing* for something, and building castles in the air. Now what do you wish to have?"

"I wish to have some sheep, so that I might make use of their flesh for eating, and their wool for clothing."

"In that case, I wish to have a pack of wolves who may devour the whole of your flock of sheep."

The one who had the first wish hereupon abused the other, and said: "Fie upon thee! Is this the way thou performest the duties of a companion?"

Shortly words led to blows, and while they were engaged in belabouring each other, there arrived on the scene a man with an ass loaded with two leather bags of honey.

On seeing him, the two ceased fighting, and decided to lay their case before him, to see who was in the right and who in the wrong. Accordingly each of the combatants laid his case before the new comer, who, when he had heard both the parties, placed his leather bags on the ground, and tearing them open, so that the honey began to flow out freely, exclaimed, "May my belly be torn like these bags, and may my blood flow like this honey, if you are not a couple of fools!"

116. A Syrian went to a carpenter's workshop, and asked him to make a door for him. The carpenter wanted to know the length and breadth of the door, whereupon the Syrian went home, measured the breadth of his doorway with his extended arms, and keeping the arms so outstretched, began to return to the carpenter. But on his way he encountered a wag, who, by way of a practical joke, tripped him up, and laid him flat on his back. Even then, the Syrian would not make use of his arms, but kept them extended, and being unable to get up in this position, went on abusing the man and requesting the passers-by to pick him up. When some one offered to raise him, he shouted, "Don't take hold of my arms, or you will destroy the measure of my door. Take me up by the beard." So he was picked up in the way suggested by himself; and he went away quite a happy man at the thought, that in spite of all difficulties he had preserved the measure of his door.

117. A foolish Muezzin was seen running with all his might, immediately after uttering his morning call of summoning the Faithful to prayers. He was asked where he was going in such haste. He replied, "I am going to see how far the sound of my voice reaches!"

118. A Hamadâni was seen wandering about in a desert, as if in quest of something. He was asked what he was in search of. He replied, "I had buried my treasure somewhere here, but now I cannot find it."

"Did you not place some mark near the place?"

"Oh, I thought there was no need for it, as I had observed a peculiar shaped cloud exactly over the place. But, unfortunately, I cannot see the cloud now."

119. A boy saw his own image while looking into a well. He immediately ran to his mother and said, "Mother, come with me there is a thief in the well." The mother came to the well, and looking into it observed, "By God! thou art right; and look, *there is an old hag, too, with him!*"

120. A person seeing for the first time a very high tower, expressed his wonder, saying, "How tall the men must have been who constructed such a lofty tower!" Another wise man who was with him, hereupon observed, "Oh no! no one could have been so tall as that. I am sure this tower must have been built up lengthwise on the ground, and then set up erect in its present position!"

121. A person asked his slave, "What day of the week was it when we offered the prayers of Jum'aa in the Mosque of Baghdad?"

The slave, after racking his brains for a great length of time, said, "It must have been Tuesday!"

[The prayers of the Jum'aa are offered only on Fridays.]

122. "Can you tell me, Sir," said one man to another in a street, "how many days have elapsed since the new moon?" "Oh, I am not of this city; I am a stranger here, so I am unable to give you the information."

123. A person purchased some quantity of flour from the bazaar, and to take it home, he called for a porter and placed the bag of flour on his shoulders.

The porter, on finding an opportunity, when his employer's attention was turned elsewhere, ran away with the flour, and disappeared.

After some days the owner of the flour unexpectedly came across the same porter, but instead of giving him in charge for the theft, himself ran away from him.

A friend of his asked him the reason for such conduct, saying, "Why did you not demand back from him your property?" He replied, "I was afraid he would demand from me his portorage!"

124. A person was holding ten eggs in the folds of his skirt. He met a fool, to whom, for the sake of a joke, he said "If you can tell me what I hold in my skirt, one of the eggs is yours; and if you can tell me how many there are, all the ten are yours." The fool replied: "O brother, I am not an angel so as to be able to know hidden things. At least give me *some* hint so that I may be able to guess rightly," The man replied, "There are certain white things with something yellow inside." "I know, I know", replied the fool, "you have got some carrots in the midst of radishes!"

The above story was once related in an assembly, and was greeted with roars of laughter. After the laughter had subsided, a Khorasani noble who was present, asked with a perplexed look: "But what was there in the skirt after all?" This query was a fresh source of laughter to the men present, and those who could not previously believe the story to be true, believed it now.

125. A group of persons were praying together in a mosque. One of them uttered some word which did not form a part of the prayer, whereupon the man next him reproached him saying, "Thou hast spoken in the midst of thy prayers, so thy prayers are inefficacious. Thou wilt have to begin again." The third man laughed and said, "The prayers of *both* of you are null and void." The fourth man said: "All three of you have spoken and your prayers will have to be recited again." "Thank God," exclaimed the fifth man, "that *I* have not spoken a single word!"

126. A fool found a mirror lying in the middle of the road. He picked it up, and on seeing his own image reflected in it, again left it on the ground, saying "I beg your pardon, Sir, I knew not that this thing belonged to you."

127. In Isphahan there was a madman who, standing in the bazaar, used to beat the passers-by saying, "Why don't you all take one side of the road?" As he would not listen to reason, and as using force against him was out of the question, owing to the people regarding a madman as one rapt in divine ecstasy, a wise man advised them to bring forward another madman to argue with him. This was done; and when the first madman asked the above question to the passers-by, the other replied, "You know, the earth is like a shield floating on water. If all the people were to go on one side, that part would become too heavy, and the earth would be overturned."

Strange to say, this reply satisfied the first madman, and he gave up annoying the passers-by.

128. A villager came to a city. After wandering about in the streets, staring hard at every object he saw, in order that on his return home he may be able to narrate before an admiring audience the wonders he had seen, he entered a mosque. He heard the preacher speaking of the powers of the Almighty, who can turn an atom into a Sun, a piece of stone into a ruby, and a beggar into a Sultan. The villager on hearing these words said to himself, "Thank God! I can now see my way to earn a livelihood without going under the obligation of any one. I shall pray to God, and ask Him to give me one thousand dinars quickly."

So the next morning he again came to the mosque, and spreading the skirts of his robe on the ground, said, "O God, send me a thousand dinars, for my family need it very much."

He waited the whole day with his eyes fixed on the ceiling, but the poor fellow did not see anything except some quantity of dust, which fell now and then from the crevices of the ceiling and made him jump up in the hope that it was gold. His patience being exhausted by evening time, he said, "O God, I know well now, I have no need of one thousand dinars, which are in excess of my requirements; I want only five hundred, out of which a hundred will be required for my marriage, a hundred for purchasing a house, a hundred for furnishing it and laying in stock the necessary provisions, and two hundred for my trading capital."

With these words he again drew upon his patience, and waited till the morning, but not finding himself in any way nearer to the object of his desire, he said with a forced smile, "O God, I now understand that the objection on Thy part is to the sum of two hundred dinars, mentioned last, for which I have not much real need. Well then give me the remaining three hundred dinars, which I cannot do without." And with these words, he again held up his skirts to receive the expected treasure.

It happened that at this time a sparrow passed over his head, and in its flight dropped its excrement into his skirt. The man in his stupidity attributed this to a practical joke on the part of God, and said with a forced smile, "O God is this a time for jesting and joking?"

In short the fellow waited in the mosque for full two days in expectation of the treasure, but on the third day, owing to hunger and weariness, he became tired of the job, and said angrily: "O God, if Thou give now even a thousand dinars, I swear by the souls of my father and mother, that I will not hold the gift in higher estimation than a mere clod of earth."

Saying these words he rose, and prepared to go out, but nevertheless he now and then glanced towards the ceiling, in the hope that it may perhaps be rent asunder and a shower of gold fall therefrom.

It happened that just as he was slowly and reluctantly moving away, the shock of an earthquake laid him prostrate on the ground. As he had no previous experience of an earthquake, nor had even heard of it, the villager was at first terrified. But presently taking courage, he said, looking behind him, "O God! I am of my own accord going away from this place, *there was no need of kicking me out!*"

129. A person was observed to repeat, after offering his usual prayers, the words "*Shukr Allah*," (i.e., Thanks be to God) a hundred times; and after that he repeated the words "*aklash*," (i.e., at least), ten times. He was asked what the latter expression meant. He replied: "I do not know. But in the prayer book it is so mentioned." On opening the book, the sentence found therein was to this effect: "After this prayer the words '*Shukr Allah*' should be repeated a hundred times—at the least ('*aklash*') ten times."

130. A Turk sent his son to school, to learn Arabic. After some time, during which he had spent a considerable sum on the education of his child, he asked him what he had learnt during the period. The son mentioned the names of certain books. "Let me see," said the father, "bring me one of your books, and translate to me the passage that I point out to you." A book was accordingly brought. The Turk, who was himself unacquainted with the Arabic tongue, opened the book at random, and pointing with his finger towards the beginning words of the top line, told his son to translate the words.

It happened that the words were لا اعلم, signifying in Arabic, "I do not know." The boy accordingly said: "I do not know." "What!" exclaimed the father; "has so much time and money been simply wasted, that you come to me and say you do not know the meaning of the first two words that I point out to you?"

The son tried to explain, but the father would not listen to any explanation, and soundly thrashed the poor little fellow for no fault of his!

131. A Kazwini's son fell into a well. The Kazwini went to the well and said to the son: "*Don't go away* till I return with a rope and take you out!"

132. A Kâzi died, and his post was given to his son, who, in addition to being illiterate, was wanting in common-sense. Accordingly, his friends and relations persuaded him to learn Arabic, and a qualified teacher was duly engaged. In going over the Arabic grammar, the tutor, in order to explain the construction of a sentence, told the young Kâzi to bear in mind the sentence, in the book, "*Zaid struck Amr*," wherein Zaid is the subject.

"But why did Zaid strike Amr?" here interposed the young Kâzi: "the latter must have done something wrong."

"This is merely an example to illustrate the construction of a sentence," said the tutor. The striking mentioned here has not really taken place."

"Oh, you cannot make me believe that," said the Kâzi. "Go and fetch this Zaid and also the lawyers. The good man who wrote this book positively asserts that Zaid struck Amr."

"But, my dear Sir! This Zaid has not been created by God, nor has this Amr been born of any mother. These are imaginary personages."

"Nonsense! You must have been bribed by that Zaid to say so. I must make an example of you. I cannot allow such unjust doings during the time of my Kâziship."

And forthwith the poor tutor was put into prison, whence the relatives of the Kâzi got him liberated, after much trouble.

133. A wag came to a village which was bounded on the north by a hill that prevented the northerly breezes from passing through the village. He said to the villagers: "Would you like to have the hill removed so as to make the village accessible to the breezes?" They replied, "If you can do so, we shall be very much obliged." "Well then," said he, "I undertake to remove the hill on the condition that you feast me and provide me with creature-comforts for the full period of one year. After that period I shall remove the hill." The condition was agreed to, and after feasting him for a whole year they came to him and asked him to fulfil his promise. He said: "Let all the people of the village assemble here, and let me have a rope very strong and very long."

This was done. He then said: "Now take this rope and put it round the hill." They did as directed. Then taking the two ends of the rope in his hands, and turning his back towards the hill, he said: "Now with your united effort, lift up the hill and place it on my shoulders, so that I may carry it to a great distance from your village and throw it into some large cavity." "You are mad," said the villagers; "how can we lift up the hill and place it on your shoulders!" "You are mad yourselves," replied he, "for since a thousand men like you cannot lift up the hill, how can you expect a single man like me to take it away?"

134. A man whose ass was stolen was seen offering the prayer of thanksgiving. Being asked the reason for this he replied, "I am thankful that I was not riding on the ass when it was stolen, otherwise the thieves would have stolen me also!"

135. The people of Sivri Hissâr are said to be simpletons. One of them had some pain in the eye, and went to a neighbour to ask his advice about the remedy. The latter replied, "Some time ago, I had severe pain from toothache: I had the tooth drawn out and there was instantaneous relief. Follow the same course with your eye!"

136. A weaver who had lent some money to a schoolmaster came to claim it at a time when the latter was surrounded by his pupils and was engaged in hearing their lessons. The weaver made his request, and was told by the master to wait a few minutes till he had finished. The weaver was in haste, and the lessons took a long time. When he saw that the boys did the speaking while the teacher did nothing but nod from time to time, (as is usual when the lessons are correctly recited), he thought that teaching merely consisted of nodding, and said to the pedagogue, "I am in haste; prithee, get up and let me take your place: I will do the nodding while you are away to get me my money." This set them all a-laughing.

137. A Kazwini went to the war, armed with a large shield. A stone hurled from a fortress cracked his skull, whereupon he cried out—"Are ye blind? Can you not see even such a large shield as this, that you throw the stone at my head instead of at the shield?"

138. Some Kazwinis went to the war. Everyone who returned had with him an enemy's head fixed to his lance, except one who had a leg instead of a head. They asked him, "Who killed the man?" "I," said he. They said, "Why did you not bring his head?" "That," said he, "had been taken off before I reached the fellow!"

139. A Kazwini lost a ring in his house, but he sought for it in the street, urging as a reason that the house was too dark.

140. A Kazwini suffering from an aching tooth went to a dentist, who said, "Give me two dinars and I will pull it out." He said, "I will not give more than one dinar;" but the dentist was inexorable. When the pain became unbearable the man laid two

dinars before the dentist, and opened his mouth. He pointed to a tooth that was sound, and the dentist pulled it out. The man said, "I made a mistake," and pointed out the aching tooth. The dentist pulled that out also. The Kazwini exultingly said, "You wanted to take advantage of me, and to charge two dinars for a single tooth, but I have been too clever for you, and have managed to get my teeth pulled out at one dinar each!"

141. A Kazwini returned from Baghdad in summer. They asked him, "What were you doing there?" "Perspiring," said he.

Stories of Thieves.

142. A party of thieves entered the house of a poor man, and although they ransacked the house from top to bottom, they could not find anything worth carrying off. The owner of the house awoke, and coolly said to them, "What a pack of fools are ye to search in the dark for such things as I cannot find here in the broad daylight!"

143. A thief one night entered a house, and spreading his cloak on the ground, (with the view of tying up in it whatever valuable articles he might come across), he went his round of the house. He could not find anything worth carrying off except some quantity of flour, which he took up in his hands, and he returned to the place where he had spread his cloak. In the meantime the master of the house who pretending to be asleep had been quietly watching the movements of the thief, had got up and noiselessly possessed himself of the cloak. When the thief returned to the place, the master raised a cry of "Thieves! Thieves!", and the thief was obliged to fly. But, as he went, he said to the master of the house, "I leave it to thy conscience to decide whether *I* have been the thief or *thou*!"

144. A thief entered the house of a poor man, a Fakir. But there was nothing in the house except a cooking pot, and a blanket with which the Fakir had covered himself. So he took the pot and went out. The Fakir, who was awake, immediately got up and followed. The thief, in crossing a street, turned to look behind him, and seeing the Fakir following leisurely, said: "O Fakir! where are you going?" "I am merely shifting my quarters," replied the Fakir, "and I have to thank you for offering your services as a

porter for carrying my pot, while I carry my blanket." The thief laughed, and made off, leaving the pot on the ground.

145. A thief entered a house, and saw a youth sleeping on the ground. He spread his scarf, that he had brought with him to tie up the stolen things, and then went to ransack the house.

In the meantime, the youth, who was awake, with a roll of his body lay himself down on the scarf, that was spread near where he was lying.

When the thief returned without finding anything worth stealing, and saw the youth, who was a strong well-built man, lying on his scarf, he deemed it prudent to beat a retreat, leaving his property behind him. As he was passing out, the youth said, "O thief please shut the door behind you, so that no one else may enter."

"No! by my soul, no," replied the thief, "I will not shut the door; for some one may bring you a blanket in the same manner that I brought you a bed-sheet."

146. A thief went into a garden, and plucking the fruits from the branches filled his skirt with them. At this time the owner of the garden suddenly came up and catching hold of the thief said, "Why hast thou come here uninvited?"

"I have not come here of my own accord," replied the thief; "but a strong hurricane got hold of me and has brought me here, much against my will." "And why did you pluck the fruits?" asked the gardener. "Oh, that too was the work of the hurricane," replied the thief. "Granted," said the gardener, "that the wind brought you here and threw down the fruit from the branches; but how did the fruit come into your skirt, and who tied the skirt to your waist?" The thief smiled, and replied, "Friend, I swear by thy dear soul that this is what puzzles *me* too!"

147. A Khorasani went into a garden, with a ladder, to steal the fruits. The owner of the garden came upon him, and asked, "What business have you in this garden?" "I am selling ladders," replied he. "What! You have come, *here*—here, into my garden, to sell ladders?" "Yes, why not?" said the man, "the ladder is my property is it not? And have I not the right to sell it wherever I like?"

148. One night a thief betook himself to the house of a rich man and collected many valuables. Just when he was leaving

the house, he saw a number of watchmen coming in his direction, whereupon he resolved to use stratagem in order to escape their inquisitiveness. Spying a broom, he took it up and began to sweep. The watchmen arrived, and asked what occasion there was to sweep the house at midnight. The thief said, "The master of the house has died this evening. The passage is dirty, and as there will be plenty of other work to do in the morning I make use of this opportunity." The watchmen asked, "How is it that we do not hear the voice of lamentation?" The thief replied, "To-morrow morning you will hear it sure enough." The watchmen went their way, and the thief his. In the morning, when the master of the house discovered the theft, he raised an outcry. When the watchmen came to know of the theft, they felt very much ashamed at having been so fooled by the thief.

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Stories of Beggars.

149. A beggar came near a group of persons engaged in taking their meals, and greeted them with, "Good morning, O ye misers!"

"How do you know we are misers?" asked one of the party.

"If you are not," replied the beggar, "why don't you prove me to be a liar by offering me some of your food?"

150. A beggar went to the house of a rich man and asked for a morsel of bread. The master replied that the bread had not yet come from the baker's.

"Give me some quantity of flour, then."

"It is all consumed."

"At least give me some water; I am thirsty."

"The water-bearer has not brought it yet."

"Well, give me some oil to rub over my head."

"We have none in the house."

"Well, since you do not seem to have anything in the house, come with me—we shall go a-begging together!"

151. A beggar came to the house of a rich man and solicited alms. The master of the house said aloud to one of his slaves, "O Mubarak, go and tell Qambar to say to Yâqoot that he should ask Bilâl to inform the beggar that there is nothing in the house."

The beggar, on hearing these words, exclaimed, "O God, order Gabriel to make known to Michael that he should tell Israphael to say to Azrael that he should take the life of the master of this house."

152. A Durweish went to the house of a miser and asked alms. The miser said to him: "O Durweish, come to-morrow, for I have then invited some guests, and as a great quantity of food will be prepared for them, I shall give you also something out of it." "Well, but give me something *to-day*," said the Durweish, "so that I may have life enough left in me to be able to come here to-morrow."

The miser laughed and gave him a trifle.

153. Moulânâ Arshad was a begging Durweish, and at the same time a very good preacher. Once Malik Husein wanted to send an envoy to Shah Shujâ'a for some diplomatic purpose. His ministers informed him that no one could be a better man for the purpose than Mulla Arshad, who was accordingly called to the royal presence. Malik Husein said to him: "I want to send you as envoy to the Court of Shah Shujâ'a; but as you are given to begging, you must first promise me that you will not give way to this propensity during the time of your stay there."

Mulla Arshad gave the required promise, whereupon Malik Husein gave him 20,000 dinars, and an additional sum of 5,000 dinars for road expenses.

Mulla Arshad went to Shirâz, to the Court of Shah Shujâ'a, and after bringing the subject-matter of his embassy to a successful termination wanted to return. Shah Shujâ'a said to him: "The fame of your preaching has preceded you here, and we are very anxious to hear your sermons. Oblige us by appointing a day for your homily." Friday was accordingly appointed. After the usual prayers were over, he ascended the pulpit, and delivered his discourse in such impassioned words that he brought tears to the eyes of his hearers. But his habit of begging was too strong for him. So he said to them: "Brethren, before I came here as an envoy, I used to beg—even on the pulpit. But those who sent me here have made me take an oath that I would not beg during my stay here. Well, dear brethren, if I have sworn not to beg, may I ask whether you too have sworn, not to give me anything?" The congregation laughed in the midst of their tears, and there and then subscribed for him a handsome sum.

154. A beggar asked alms at the door of a house. The porter said, "God help thee! Go, there is no one in the house." The beggar said, "I asked for a piece of bread and not for any person in the house!"

155. A darwish came to the gates of a village where some headmen were sitting. He said, "Give me some alms, or, by God! I shall do to this village the very thing that I did to the village that I have just left." They, taking him to be either a magician or a saint capable of doing harm to their village, felt afraid and gave him some money. Afterwards they ventured to ask him, "What did you do to that village?" He said, "There I asked alms and was given nothing, so I left the place and came hither. If you too had given me nothing, I should have similarly left your village and gone to another!"

Stories of Misers.

156. Some friends of a miser asked him on an occasion when they paid him a visit: "How should we know that you are tired of our company and you want us to depart?" "Nothing more simple," said the miser; "whenever I tell my servant to bring me my dinner, you may know that you have overstayed your time: you know my habit—that I eat alone, so that I may not have to offer food to any one."

157. A miser was asked whether he could give any example of 'pleasure after pain.' "Yes," said he, "for instance, if a guest were to come to my house and I should have to offer him food—that would be 'pain.' But if the guest were to reply he could not partake of the food owing to his having to observe a fast—that would be 'pleasure after pain'."

158. A person said to his friend: "Come with me to my house, and partake with me of my bread and salt." The friend, knowing that 'bread and salt' was a colloquial term for substantial food, went with him. The master of the house laid before him merely some pieces of bread and some grains of salt, which the guest was obliged to eat, albeit with a very wry face. At this juncture a beggar came to the door and asked alms. The master of the house told him to go away, saying there was nothing in the house. But

the beggar was importunate; so the master threatened to belabour him with a stick if he did not go away. Here the guest interposed, saying to the beggar, "Go, my friend, go! The master of this house is a man of his word; whatever he says he performs—as *I have found to my cost to-day!*"

159.* A merchant of Isfahân was so great a niggard, that for many years he denied himself and his son, a young boy, every support, except a crust of coarse bread. He was, however, one day tempted by the description a friend gave of the flavour of cheese to buy a small piece, but before he got home he began to reproach himself with extravagance, and instead of eating the cheese, he put it into a bottle and contented himself, and obliged his child to do the same, with rubbing the crust against the bottle, enjoying the cheese in imagination. One day that he returned home later than usual, he found his son eating his crust, and rubbing it against the door. "What are you about, you fool!" was his exclamation. "It is dinner time, father; you have the key, so I could not open the door; —I was rubbing my bread against it, because I could not get to the bottle." "Cannot you go without cheese one day, you luxurious little rascal? You'll never be rich," added the angry miser, as he kicked the poor boy for not being able to deny himself the ideal gratification.

Stories of Man and God.

160. An oilman and a potter were neighbours. The former owned an ox, while the latter was the possessor of an ass. The braying of the ass at all unseasonable hours considerably annoyed the oilman, who one night prayed to God that the ass might die. It so happened that on the same night the oilman's ox died. Next morning when the oilman saw his own animal dead, he turned his face to the heavens, and addressing God, said, "What a pity that Thou, who hast been functioning as God for so many years, shouldst not yet be able to distinguish between an ox and an ass!"

161. A person was sitting bareheaded by the side of a wall, and saying, "O God, send me a hat from Thy hidden storehouse, so that I may put it on my head." It happened that a scavenger who was engaged in removing the filth from a neighbouring house,

* From Malcolm's "Sketches of Persia."

found a dirty old hat lying in the midst of the filth; this he picked out, and flung it high in the air. By a strange coincidence, the hat came down and fell on the head of the bareheaded man, just as he had finished his request to God. The first feelings of the man were those of surprise, that his prayers should have been so readily answered, but when he saw the condition the hat was in, he flung it away from him in disgust (throwing it towards the sky), and said, "O Lord! this hat is not a suitable one for me. Place it on the head of Gabriel if Thou likest, but send me a better one."

162. A person travelling on foot became tired, and therefore, turning his face towards the sky, he said, "O Lord! send me a horse." At this juncture there came in sight a horseman, who had with him a small colt also. The colt was exhausted with marching, and could hardly jog on. The horseman, on seeing the pedestrian, beckoned to him to come near, and then with threats forced him to take up the colt on his shoulders. The poor fellow after marching for a while in this fashion, turned his face towards the sky, and said, "O Lord! I asked Thee to give me an animal *to ride on*, but Thou hast sent me an animal *that rides on me*. Either *Thou* hast heard wrong, or I made some mistake in uttering my wish."

Fables.

163.* An old lion was hungry. Going about in quest of some prey, he came upon a strong-bodied mule. "It will not be easy," thought the lion, "to overcome the mule with force; I had better use some stratagem." Accordingly he approached the mule, and by way of opening the conversation asked, "Brother, what is your age?" The mule replied, "I do not know. But my late revered father used to say that the date of my birth was written on the hoofs of my hind legs. You may read it if you like." When the lion approached the heels, in order to read, the mule made such good use of his hind legs, that there was not a whole bone left in the body of the lion.

164. A tribe of nomad Arabs once shifted their quarters, and during the journey from one place to another, a camel and an ass belonging to them were somehow left behind. The two animals

* La Fontaine's fable of "The Wolf and the Horse" is similar to this.

lived at ease in the woods for some time, but one day the ass said to the camel: "I feel an overpowering desire for music, and I want to sing."

"Don't do it!" exclaimed the camel, "God has been merciful to us, and has just released us from the hands of men. Your singing will betray our whereabouts, and men will capture us again."

But the ass would not listen to the advice of his companion, and gave vent to the music in him, on hearing which, some travellers, who were going along the road, came up to the place, captured the two animals, and loaded them with their baggage. After a time the ass, who was overloaded, grew faint, and was unable to move. Accordingly he was relieved of his burden, and was himself placed on the back of the camel. On passing through a narrow and steep pass on the ridge of a mountain, the camel said to the ass: "I am seized with a whim of dancing. Your musical notes have given liveliness to my limbs."

"Oh don't!" said the ass, "or at least wait till we are out of this pass. Have you not the fear of God before your eyes?"

But the camel would not listen to the ass, and began to dance, whereupon the ass fell from his back and rolled down the steep sides of the mountain.

165.* A cock and a dog were good friends, and were journeying through the woods. One night the cock roosted on the bough of a tree, while the dog slept at the foot of it. When it was nearly dawn, the cock, according to his habit, began to crow, on hearing which, a fox, who was in the neighbourhood, came to the foot of the tree, and not noticing the dog who still slept, said to the cock, "O thou *Pesh-nimâz*,† come down so that we may offer up together the prayers of Juma'a." The cock replied, "I am merely the Muezzin whose duty it is to call up the Faithful to prayers; the *Pesh-nimâz* is sleeping below; awake him, so that he may join you in your devotions." The fox, on looking about, saw the dog, who was just waking from his sleep, and so he turned about to run away. "Where are you going in such a hurry?" asked the cock. "Oh! I have forgotten my ablutions," said the fox, "and I am running home to perform them."

* Similar to a fable of La Fontaine.

† The leader of prayer in a mosque.

166. In the reign of an oppressive king a wealthy man died. The Vizier of the tyrant sent for the son of the dead man, and asked him what his father had left behind.

"That which he has left behind," said the youth, "consists of—first of all, *myself*, your humble slave, and secondly, such and such property, of which he has appointed your noble self the sole heir."

The Vizier laughed and ordered that the property should be divided into two equal portions, of which one was to be given to the son, and the other to be taken possession of in the name of the King.

167.* A person had a dog, of whom he was very fond. When the dog died, his master had him secretly buried in the cemetery of the Mohammedans. The circumstances came to the ears of the Kâzi, who sent for the man, and reprimanded him severely for his irreligious act, threatening to burn him alive. The man said, "I have a few words to say to you in private. After you have once heard me, I shall willingly submit to any punishment that you may deem fit to inflict on me." The Kâzi accordingly took him to his private chamber.

The man then said, "O Kâzi! when my dog was on his death-bed, I asked him whether he wanted to make a will and to leave a legacy to anyone. He replied, 'In return for my long and faithful service to you, I only ask that you should, after my death, take to the Kâzi, and present to him, a very fat sheep from our flock, so that he may offer up prayer for my soul.'"

The Kâzi, on hearing of this legacy, said, "May God forgive him! Let me know by-and-by what was the illness of which he died; in the meantime get up and execute his will. May God give thee a good return, and may He have mercy upon the soul of the deceased!"

166. Two men came to a Kâzi for judgment in a suit. One of them had sent beforehand some quantity of oil to the house of the Kâzi, while the other had sent a sheep. The Kâzi was aware of the former present, but not of the latter. So he gave his judgment in favour of the sender of the oil. The other party wanted to inform the Kâzi of the present that he had sent, and hit upon the following mode. He said to the Kâzi: "Your honour, the people of your house have come to inform you that the sheep has spilled the oil."

* Rutebœuf, a French wit of the 13th century, has a similar story, wherein a priest who buries his ass in the churchyard is called to account by the Bishop.

The Kâzi now knew that that man had brought a sheep, so turning to him he said, "Let me see; repeat your plea; I did not attend to you properly—my thoughts were elsewhere." When the man for the second time urged his claim, the Kâzi gave decision in *his* favour.

169. A man sent for a porter and said to him, "Take this box, full of bottles, to my house, and for wages I shall give you three valuable bits of advice." The porter agreed to the terms. When about a third of the way was passed the porter asked the man to fulfil a part of his contract by giving him the first bit of advice. "If any one tells thee," replied the man, "that an empty stomach is better than a full one, do not believe him."

When another third of the way was passed, the porter asked him for the second bit of advice. "If any one tells thee," said the man, "that trudging on foot is better than riding on horseback, do not believe him."

When the house was reached, the porter asked him for the third bit of advice. "If any one tells thee," said the man, "that there is in the city a cheaper porter and a greater blockhead than thou, do not believe him."

The porter then threw the box on the ground, so that all the bottles got broken; and, turning to his employer, said he, imitating his style, "If any one tells thee that even a single bottle out of this lot has remained whole, do not believe him."

And with these words he left.

170. Several friends forming a picnic party, went to a garden, and finding a suitable place, spread the dinner cloth. A dog who was at some distance, on seeing these preparations for dinner, came running to the place, whereon one of the party took up a piece of stone, and threw it towards the dog, with the voice and gesture of one throwing a morsel of bread. The dog sniffed at it for a while, and then, to the astonishment of all present, ran off without once looking back or paying heed to their repeated calls.

One of them said to his companions: "Do you know what the dog said to himself as he turned back?"

"No. What did he say?"

"He said: 'These miserly wretches cannot afford to eat anything more nourishing than stones—of what use is my staying here in expectation of a morsel?'"

171. Said a man to another: "Do you believe that men will again be made alive, after death?"

"I do," replied the other.

"Well then, lend me a thousand *ashrafs*, and I promise to return them to you when I am again made alive."

"That I can. But you must first bring me some security that you will not be made to appear on that day in the form of a dog or a pig; for I do not believe that a man like *you* will ever be allowed to reappear in human form."

172. A woman had lost by death five husbands, and had married for the sixth time. It happened that her husband fell ill, and was nigh unto death, whereupon she began to cry and lament, saying, "O husband, dear, if (God forbid!) you should die, what will become of me? Whom do you leave me to?" The man smiled and gasped out,—*"To the seventh unfortunate man who may marry you."*

173. It is mentioned in the Hadees that he who offers up a single prayer with *undivided attention* may get all his prayers accepted by God.

A Mahomedan saint relates—"When I learnt this Hadees, I determined to go to the Mosque of Koofah and to recite the prayers there, since the mosque is reckoned as one of the holiest in the country, and there is not much disturbance from men during prayer time. Well, I went there, and had scarcely proceeded with two or three lines, when a thought occurred to me that it was a pity that such a holy mosque should have no suitable minaret. Then I thought of what difficulties there were in the way of constructing a minaret—for instance, stones could be procured from such and such a place, mortar from this place, and bricks from that. Then I thought of a competent architect to undertake the work, who would perhaps have to be brought from Isfahan; and, in short, I was in the midst of these reflections when I came to the conclusion of my prayers. I then flung my turban on the ground and said, 'By God! it seems as if I came here to project the building of a minaret instead of to pray!'"

174. A Soofee brought some quantity of wheat to a miller and requested him to grind it for him. The miller replied that he had no leisure.

"If you do not grind my corn," said the Soofee, "I shall curse you and your ass."

"Do it, and welcome!" replied the miller, "for had your prayers for good or evil any value, you would not have come to *me* for getting your corn turned into flour, but would have asked *God* to do so."

175. A king was going along a road on horseback, when he encountered a man, on seeing whom the horse shied, and the king was thrown to the ground. The king got up enraged, and ordered that the man should be executed. The poor fellow asked for what fault of his such punishment was to be inflicted on him.

"You possess an evil eye," said the king, "and the sight of you brings ill-luck, for I fell from my horse."

The man replied, "At the sight of *me* you fell to the ground, but got up without much harm; while at the sight of *you*, I am going to be executed. Now, do me justice, O king, which of us twain is the bird of ill-omen?"

The king laughed and let him go.

176. A debtor was brought before a Kâzi by his creditor. The creditor said to the Kâzi: "This fellow owes me a certain sum of money which has long since been due, but he has put me off from time to time on various pretexts. I request Your Excellency to order an immediate payment of the sum due." The Kâzi turned towards the debtor and asked him what he had to say. "This man speaks the truth," said the debtor: "I only ask you to give me some *time*, so that in the interval I may sell off my cows and sheep, my house and furniture and my garden. I shall then pay him from the proceeds." "This is all a lie," interposed the creditor, "the fellow possesses nothing of all that he has described; he is quite poor. This is merely a pretence to have the payment deferred."

"When my creditor himself testifies to my pauperism, O Kâzi," said the debtor, "ask him what is it that he wants from me."

The Kâzi dismissed the suit.

177. Two persons who had a dispute regarding the possession of a date-plantation, laid their case before the Kâzi. The plaintiff brought forward several witnesses, who were asked by the Kâzi whether they knew the number of date trees in the plantation.

They replied that they did not.

"Well, then, I ought not to accept your testimony," said the Kâzi.

One of the witnesses hereupon came forward and said, "O Kâzi, how many years have you been sitting in this court?"

"For more than five years," replied the Kâzi.

"Do you know how many pillars are there in this building?"

"I do not know."

"Well, since you cannot tell the number of pillars in this building where you have held your court for upwards of five years, how can you expect us to tell you the number of date trees in a field belonging to *another* person?"

The Kâzi laughed and accepted their testimony.

178. An author relates that when he was in the city of Koo-fah he saw a person wrangling with his neighbour and abusing him. "I asked him," says he, "the cause of the quarrel, and he replied, 'A friend of mine had come to see me, and in order to treat him hospitably, I had sent for a cooked sheep's head. After we had eaten together, I left the bones outside my door, so that the people may know I am one of those who can afford to eat good food, and I may thereby be honoured in the sight of men. But this rascally neighbour of mine has removed the bones to his own door, so that the people may imagine it was *he* who lived so sumptuously.'"

179. A courtier once said to a king, "I have seen no one so lazy as you are."

"How so?" asked the king. "Because," said he, "you could very easily have given utterance to an order to give me, say, a hundred thousand direms; but you have been too lazy to give so much trouble to your tongue."

The king smiled, and ordered something to be given to him.

180. An author relates that in a certain city he paid a visit to the cemetery, and saw there a tombstone, on which were engraved the following lines:—

"I am the son of that man who had air under his command. He could imprison it or let it loose whenever he liked."

This led him to imagine that the father of the man buried must have been some great magician. But on turning to depart he saw another tombstone exactly opposite the former one, and bearing this inscription: "*Let no one be deceived by the boast of the man buried opposite, for his father was a mere blacksmith, who could confine the air in his bellows and let it loose therefrom.*"

The author here adds, "I went away very much astonished to find that there are men in whom hatred survives even death."

181. A person claimed to be a prophet. He was asked by some persons to give some sign of prophethood. He said, "Let every one of you think upon something, and I shall be able to tell you your thoughts." They said, "We have each thought of something. Now tell us our thoughts." He replied, "Well, all of you are thinking that I am a fool, and that I am telling you a falsehood." They acknowledged that for once he was right.

182. A person said to Mazeed, "Whenever you see yourself attacked by a dog, recite such and such verses from the Koran, and the animal will not be able to harm you." "I had better keep a stick with me," replied he, "for you know, all dogs are not versed in the Koran."

183. A grammarian, while crossing a river in a boat, asked the boatman whether he had ever studied syntax. The latter replied that he had not. "Then, one-half of your life has been simply wasted."

It happened that a violent storm arose, and the boat began to dance upon the waves. It was now the boatman's turn to ask: "Have you ever learnt to swim?" "No," replied the grammarian. "Then," retorted the boatman, "the whole of your life will now be wasted."

184. A farmer came to the governor of the province, and said, "The produce of my farm is merely ten maunds, but your subordinates have assessed it at one hundred maunds, for revenue purposes." The governor became angry and said, "Are you not ashamed, with ten maunds of beard on your face, to tell me such lies? Can any one put down a hundred maunds for a produce that is only ten maunds?"

The farmer replied, "Since you yourself do not scruple to estimate my beard at ten *maunds*, when it hardly weighs five *misqâls*, I cannot now find fault with your subordinates."

The governor laughed and said, "Get thee gone! I will have thine estimate accepted as the right one."

185. A philosopher tried to enter into conversation with a handsome youth, but the replies of the latter were given in a rude and surly tone. "Humph!" said the philosopher to himself, "here is a vessel of gold full of vinegar."

186. Two friends were sitting together, taking their meals, under a tree. They had before them three fried fishes, one small

and the other two large. The friends saw a third person approaching, whereupon they concealed the two large fishes in a pot, and on the stranger's nearer approach, invited him to join them in the dinner.

As the stranger had got a glimpse of the larger fishes, he after partaking of two or three morsels, asked his hosts whether they knew all the particulars of the story of Jonas who was swallowed by a whale. They replied that they did not. "Allow me, then, to question this fish," said he, and bringing his ears very near to the fish, he remained in a listening attitude for a while, and then said, "This fish says 'I am not so very well acquainted with the details. You must question the two larger fishes that are lying inside the pot.'" The men laughed, and brought forth the other two fishes also.

187. An astrologer was sentenced to be hung on the gallows. He was asked whether he had foreseen this fate. He replied, "The stars informed me that I was to be in an exalted position at the time of death; but I did not know that the exalted position was due to the height of the gallows."

188. A king was very fat, so much so, that the slightest exercise fatigued him. He summoned together the best doctors in the country, and asked them to cure him of his fatness. Every one of the doctors tried his skill, but it was of no avail. One day a wise man came to the court of the king, and said: "I have heard that your Majesty is trying to get lean. I am a physician and also an astrologer. If you give me permission, I shall take your case in hand. But as the treatment will last a long time, I shall first try to learn to-night from the aspect of the stars whether your life is sufficiently long for my treatment to produce its effect." The permission was given.

Next morning the man again came to the king, and said with a sorrowful face: "The stars inform me that only one month is left of your Majesty's life on this earth; and as the time is too short for my treatment to be effective, I must be excused from taking your case in hand. Meanwhile, if you have any doubt as to the truth of my words, keep me confined, and give instructions to your men to liberate me after one month, if my prognostication prove true."

The king kept him confined. But the dread of approaching death made the king very sorrowful. He gave up all pleasures, and day by day his fatness decreased as his grief and anxiety increased.

After 28 days had elapsed, he sent for the astrologer and said to him: "Only two days now remain of the period you mentioned. Now, what say you?" The man replied: "How can I foretell the future, your Majesty? I do not know the duration of my own life; how can I then predict the death of others? I knew your Majesty wanted to be lean, and knew also that nothing makes a man lean so much as sorrow and anxiety. My foretelling your death was but a ruse to bring about the desired end. I ask your Majesty whether now you are not quite as lean as you desired to be, and whether your health has not improved all round."

The king, on learning that, after all, he was not to die so soon, became very joyful, applauded the man for his ingenuity, and gave him a very handsome reward.

189. It is said that in an art-gallery in China there are three portraits, representing men in different postures. In one of them there is a man in a sitting attitude with his head hung low, deep in meditation. In the second there is a man who seems to be striking his forehead and plucking his beard; and in the third, a man is seen dancing and laughing. Under the first portrait is written: "This man is thinking of getting married." Under the second is written: "This man has married and repented;" and under the third: "This man has divorced his wife."

190. The philosophers have said, that whenever any person comes forth from his house in the morning, and says, "That which is nearer unto God is better," or words to that effect,—you may know for certain that there was some festivity in the house of his neighbour, to which he was not invited.

And when you see a group of persons issuing from the Court of the Kâzi and saying to one another, "We testified to what we had actually seen and heard,"—know for certain that they have just been giving some false testimony, which the Kâzi has not accepted.

And when you hear a bridegroom say on the morning after his marriage that "Continence and piety are preferable to all things," it is a sure sign that he has discovered* his bride to be very ugly.

And when you see a person coming out of the house of the ruler of the province, and saying, "The hand of God is far mightier than that of any one else,"—you may infer that he has just been *bastinadoed*.

*Among the Persians the bridegroom is never allowed to see the face of his bride, till after he is married.

191. A person said to a youth, "I want to marry such and such a girl." "Take care," said the youth, "for I have seen a man kissing her." So the would-be husband gave up the idea of marriage. After a time he learnt that this young man had himself married the girl. Thereupon he went to the youth and asked, "How is it that *you* married the very girl whom you wanted to prevent *me* from marrying?" "Oh!" said the youth, "I knew the man whom I saw kissing her: he was her father."

192. "I will not tell a single lie even for a thousand direms," a man was observing to a company.

"Except this one that you have uttered without getting for it a single direm," retorted a bystander.

193. One night the foot of a blind man slipped, and he fell down near the door of a house. He cried out, "O ye people of the house! bring a light, so that I, a poor blind man, may be able to go in safety." A person said to him, "If thou art blind, of what use is a light to thee?" He replied, "I want a light, so that he who brings it may help me to rise, and may not himself stumble in the dark."

194. A constable, on his midnight round, found a drunken man lying in the gutter. He caught hold of his sleeve and said to him, "Come, get up; let us be going." The drunken man asked, "Where shall we be going, brother?" "To the lock-up," replied the constable. "Then, for God's sake, let go my sleeve, for had I been able to walk, I should have gone home instead of lying here."

195. A man flushed with wine was standing in the bazaar at midnight, leaning on a post for support, as the world seemed to spin round him. An acquaintance of his, seeing him there, asked, "Why do you not go home?" He replied, "Friend, do you not see that the houses are all moving round and round, and passing near me? I am waiting for my house to appear, when without the least trouble, I shall jump into it."

196. A thief stole the door of the house of a witty man. The latter, when he did not see the door in the morning, went to a mosque, and, taking out a door from its hinges, brought it home, and set it in the place of his own door. He was asked what led him to commit such sacrilege. He replied: "The door of my house has been stolen. The Lord knows the thief. Let Him put the thief into my hands, and take back the door of His own house."

197. A soldier went to a tailor with a piece of silken cloth just sufficient to be made into a cloak. The tailor, who was a wag, wanted to know how many cloaks he wanted made out of the piece. "Can you make more than one?" asked the soldier, a little surprised. "Yes, if you want cloaks a little shorter and tighter, I can make two with ease."

The words "*with ease*" excited the covetousness of the soldier, who said, "O master, think well, perhaps it is possible to make three cloaks out of this piece." "Well, yes, if the cloaks being short and tight is of no matter to you, and if you give me permission, I can make four cloaks, or more, out of the piece."

The soldier smiled, and said, "O master, the tighter the garments of the soldier, the greater the facility and activity with which he can move about on the battle-field. Now try your best and get five cloaks made out of this piece." With these words the soldier went away, and returned after a week. The tailor brought to him five small cloaks, which looked just as if they were made for dolls. The sight of them made the world appear dark in the eyes of the soldier. He looked at the tailor with astonishment, and said: "For whom have you made these cloaks, or rather, these toys?"

"For you," replied the tailor.

"O master, did you not say that you could make five cloaks out of the piece I gave you?"

"Yes; I affirm it. If you take a little trouble to count, you will find they are exactly five: if they be less than five you can ask back the cloth piece you gave me."

"Yes, yes, I see they are *five*, but these are not cloaks."

"Look well again; if these be shirts, or trousers, or anything else, claim damages from me."

"Have done with your joking! I know these are cloaks, but they are exceedingly small."

"Brother, that is not my fault. I told you they would be very small and tight, and you said that for soldiers the tighter the garment the better. You yourself know well, that if from a piece, which can with difficulty be made into one cloak, you get five cloaks made, they can hardly be bigger than these that I have made for you."

198. A person went to see a friend who was ill, suffering from some pain in the knee, and said, "The learned doctor Avicenna has written a couplet containing a prescription for this disease. I have forgotten the first verse, but that will not matter much, since I remember the second." "And what is that?" asked the sick man. "The second verse is—

'And this will surely cure thy aching knee'! "

199. A tailor became a soldier, and in a battle was wounded in the head, with an arrow. The surgeon told him not to fear the result, for the arrow had not penetrated to the brain. "I had no fear of that," said the tailor, "for had I the least particle of brains, I should not have left my profession and come *here*."

200. The horse of a soldier was stolen. A person said to him, "It was your fault: you ought to have locked up the animal securely." Another man said, "The fault lies with your servant; he ought not to have left the doors of the stable open." The soldier lost patience, and exclaimed, "Aye, it is all *our* fault: but, pray, have you no fault to find with the *thief*?"

201. A soldier was seen running away from a battle-field. Those who saw him said, "Where art thou flying, O coward?" The soldier replied, "I prefer that men should say of me 'He fled: May God curse him!' to their saying 'He died on the battle-field: May God have mercy on his soul!'"

202. A person stole a goat, had him killed, and for several days feasted on the mutton. A friend of his, getting an inkling of the affair, rebuked him, saying: "How will you face the owner of the goat, when he will charge you with the theft on the Day of Judgment?"

"Oh, I will deny the theft."

"But the goat itself will be there to give evidence."

"In that case I shall catch hold of it by the ears and return it to its owner!"

203. A person brought a complaint before a Kàzi, saying, "Such and such a person insulted me and said, 'Do not be an ass.'"

"Did he?" said the Kàzi; "the fellow is a fool. Do not mind him at all: he has no right to hinder you from doing whatever you like with yourself!"

204. One of the kings of Egypt had erected two domes in his capital, and had given orders that every one who might have to pass that way should offer prayers there. Whosoever transgressed this law, whether knowingly or unknowingly, was put to death; but on the other hand, any two things that he wished for were granted, provided he did not wish for the throne, or for exemption from punishment.

One day a washerman, riding on an ass, and with his professional cudgel in his hand, passed by that place; and as he was not aware of the law, he did not offer any prayers there. The guards arrested him, and took him to the king, who rebuked him for his setting at defiance the law of the land.

The washerman pleaded as an excuse his ignorance of the law, and urged that had he been aware of any such law, he would have offered a thousand prayers instead of one. His plea was of no avail; the king told him to prepare for death, but at the same time informed him that any two of his wishes would be granted, provided he did not ask for his life or for the kingdom.

The washerman looked from the king to the nobles, requesting them to intercede for him, and began to weep, but all was of no avail.

He then said: "My first wish is that ten thousand dinars should be sent to my family this instant." This was done, and the receipt duly signed by his wife was presented to him. He then said: "My second wish is that every one of you, from the king downwards to the sentinels, should submit to three blows from my cudgel, one a light blow, one a medium blow, and one a hard blow, and I want to commence with the king."

The king, much perturbed, turned towards the vaziers, and asked them what was to be done. They advised him to submit to the treatment, since the law said that the wishes of the culprit should be granted.

So the king came down from the throne, and told the washerman to begin. The washerman laid his cudgel with such force on the shoulders of the king, that the king fell down and became insensible. When he came to his senses after a time, he asked the washerman what sort of blow it was—whether it was light, or medium, or hard. "That all depends," said the washerman, "on how Your Majesty feels the second blow. The second blow will give the necessary information."

The king said to himself: "If this was a light stroke, by God! I shall die of the medium one." Then turning towards the guards

who had brought in the washerman, he said: "You rogues! You villains! How did you know that this man did not offer his prayers? I am sure he did, and that too in such a manner that no one else up to this time has prayed with similar devotion."

The king then gave orders that the washerman should be liberated and the domes destroyed.

205. A person went to a physician and complained of pain in the stomach. "What have you eaten to-day?" asked the doctor. "Three pounds of oats, roasted and nearly burnt," replied the man. "Then you ought to go to a *veterinary surgeon*," said the doctor, "for the treatment of *beasts* is *his* speciality. I treat *men* only."

206. A barber was shaving the head of a Khwajah, when a little shaking of the barber's hand occasioned a slight cut from the razor. The Khwajah hereupon exclaimed, "You rascal! You have cut my head!" "Hush! hush! my friend," replied the barber, "a man with head cut never speaks."

207. A person, who was somewhat of a bore, went to see an acquaintance who was ill. After unconsciously causing him much annoyance with his protracted presence, he said: "Now tell me, my friend, have you any wish nearest your heart? Out with it. Don't let your wish be smothered in your bosom." "My sole desire is," replied the patient with a grim smile, "that I may die, and be thus released from the torture of your visits."

208. A pious and learned man went to a rich man and said, "It has come to my ears that you have set apart some of your riches to help needy and worthy men. I am worthy of your assistance, and am very much in want." The rich man, who was somewhat stingy, said that the money was set apart for blind persons only. "You are not blind," said he, "and I cannot help you." The man replied, "You are wrong. No one can be more blind than I, who, turning away my face from the Giver of livelihood, have turned towards a miser like yourself." And with these words he turned back. His words produced a remarkable effect on the mind of the rich man, who now ran after him and tried his best to persuade him to accept some money, but without success.

209. A man buried at the foot of a tree in a forest uncoined gold weighing a thousand *misqûls*, and went on a journey. On his return he found that the root of the tree had been partly dug out, the ground laid open, and the gold removed from it by some one.

So, with his heart full of grief, he came to Kâzi Sharih, and related to him in private all the circumstances. The Kâzi told him to come back after three days, but to take care not to mention the affair to any one during the interval.

The Kâzi then sent for the most skilful physician of the town, and asked him in private whether the root of such and such a tree had any medicinal uses. The doctor mentioned some of the principal uses. The Kâzi inquired whether he had prescribed that root for any one of his patients recently. "Yes," said the doctor, "about a month ago I prescribed the root for a man. He procured the root and got well." The Kâzi asked the physician to bring the man into his presence.

When he came, the Kâzi took him to a private room, and asking him to sit down, talked on miscellaneous subjects, interlarding his remarks with bits of religious advice, and then skilfully drew out from him the confession that he had found a treasure. The Kâzi then ordered him to give it back to its rightful owner.

210. A man who was given to jesting, and who would not give up his habits even when he became old, was one day admonished by his neighbours and acquaintances, who said to him: "You had better turn your thoughts to prayers and repentance; this is not the time for you to joke and jest. Devote your leisure hours to hearing the Hadees (traditions of the Prophet) read." He replied: "Rest assured, gentlemen, I have not neglected the traditions. I have heard many." "Well, narrate to us one of them," said they. He rejoined: "I have heard from Nâfa'a, son of Yareed, that our Prophet used to say that there are two qualifications which every one ought to acquire if he wants to obtain happiness both in this world and in the next."

Here our wag paused for a very long time.

"Aye, but tell us what are those two qualifications?" asked the man. "Oh, the narrator, my friend Nâfa'a, had forgotten one of them," replied the wag, "and I have forgotten the other!"

211. A very avaricious Arab while passing through a desert, came across a large white stone, on which he found this line engraved:—

"Turn me upside down and thou wilt see something to thy advantage."

The Arab in the hopes of getting at some treasure buried there, exerted all his strength, and with much difficulty, and almost

exhausting himself in the effort, he succeeded in rolling the stone. He now discovered another line engraved, which ran as follows:—

“Avarice is the root of evil.

Now turn me back.”*

The Arab went away in disgust, cursing the man who had engraved the lines on the stone.

212. A physician saw a person eating together two kinds of food contrary in their effects; and he warned him against doing so, as the foods would not agree with him. Next day the physician heard that the man was ill. He went to his bedside and said: “Did I not tell you that these two foods would not agree?” “You did;” replied the man with a groan, “but by God! they seem to have *agreed* between themselves *now*, and have made common cause to torture me out of existence!”

213. A man with squinting eyes went to a physician, and said to him: “Objects appear double to my vision, and I want you to cure this defect which has been the cause of much annoyance to me.” The physician, looking up, said: “May I ask what are the ailments of the other gentlemen?” “By God!” said the man, preparing to go, “I must seek some other physician; for while I see *two* men in place of one, this fellow must at least be seeing *four*!”

214. In the month of Ramazán, a preacher once addressed his congregation in these words: “Brethren, the holy month—the month for fasting and prayers—has come again. Bethink ye, when the month was last with us, whether your time was rightly passed, and whether the month departed satisfied with your righteous deeds——.” “Yes, it went away satisfied,” interposed a wag. “How knowest thou that?” asked the preacher. “Because,” replied the wag, “had it not been satisfied, it *would not have returned this time*!”

215. A rich man had a Mausoleum built for himself, wherein he wished to have his body deposited after his death. When the structure was completed, he asked the builder whether anything else was wanting to make the building *perfect*. “Yes,” replied the builder, “just one thing—your own dead body.”

* There is a similar story in a book, “Scotch Wit and Humour” :—

“In Galloway large craigs are met with having ancient writing on them. One on the farm of Knockleby has, cut deep on the upper side,—

‘Lift me up and I’ll tell you more.’

A number of people gathered to this craig and succeeded in lifting it up, in hopes of being well repaid; but instead of finding any gold, they found written on it,—

‘Lay me down as I was before.’

216. A person went to a Kâzi and said: "If I were to eat dates, would it be against the dictates of religion?"

"No," said the Kâzi.

"And if I were to add a little quantity of water?"

"It would not be unlawful."

"And if I were to add some quantity of yeast to it?"

"It is allowable. There is nothing wrong."

"Well, then, the date-wine is merely composed of these three things. Why should wine be forbidden?"

The Kâzi said: "If I were to throw a handful of dust at your head, would it hurt you?"

"By no means," said the man.

"And if I were to add some water to it?"

"Still, I do not think it would be painful."

"Well, and if I were to knead the dust and water, and bake the mixture and make a brick of it, and then throw it at your head, how would you feel it?"

"It would break my head."

"Well, then your question has been already answered."

217. A Dervish had one day a witty man for his guest. The timbers of the roof being weak creaked now and then, which made his guest apprehensive of their falling. So he said: "O Dervish! take me to some other house, for I am afraid the roof will come down on my head." "You need have no fear of that," replied the Dervish, "the sound that you hear is merely the hosanna sung by the beams and the rafters." "That may be," said the guest, "but I am afraid the singing may culminate in Divine ecstasy, when they jump about and prostrate themselves on the ground."

218. A man whose name was Hasan wanted to have a seal engraved with his name. He went to a seal-engraver, who informed him that he would take one dinar for every letter engraved. "Very well," said Hasan, "I want to have the word *خس* (*Khas*) engraved on my seal." The two letters forming the word were soon engraved and the artist was going to put in the diacritical point, when Hasan interposed, saying: "As you have only to put in now the point, I don't think it will matter much to you where you put it." "No, it does not matter," said the engraver. "Well, then, I want to have the point put inside the curve of the letter *س*."

This was done, and Hasan took away the seal, paying two dinars, But the change in the position of the point made the name read حسن (*Hasan*), and so he got three letters engraved for the charge of two letters only.

219.* Qâsim and Hâshim were two friends, who were both given to 'drawing the long bow,' but the latter was the cleverer of the two. One day, they determined to go to the king and tell him a big lie in the hope of being well rewarded. So they went to the palace of the king, and requested audience. The king ordered them to be admitted, and when they came into his presence, he asked: "What do you want of me?"

Qâsim replied: "Sire, we have seen a very novel sight, and we have come to inform you of it. We have seen a big stone floating on a river." "Impossible!" exclaimed the king, "that is a big lie, and I'll have you flogged for your impudence." "It is not a lie, Your Majesty," interposed Hâshim; "for I can tell you how it happened." "Well, let me hear," said the king. Hâshim rejoined: "It happened in this wise: the stone had been lying for many years on one of the banks of the river, and every time that the river over-flowed its banks, mud was deposited on the stone, till the stone became twice as big as before, with the accumulated deposit. One day a seed of the gourd plant was dropped on the stone by a bird in its flight. In due time, from the seed sprouted a plant, and in due time the plant bore fine big gourds. These gourds dried up, and next time when there was an inundation, they served as floats, and buoyed up the stone. And it was in this way that the stone came to float on the water."

This explanation satisfied the king, who dismissed the men with rewards.

After a time Qâsim, who had soon reached the bottom of his purse, again went to the king, but without taking Hashim along with him, for he did not want to have the reward divided between two persons, and coveted the whole of it for himself. The king on seeing him said: "What brings you here again?" He replied: "Sire, I have seen another novel sight." "What was it?" asked the king. "I saw that a merchant's bullock went into the river, and was burnt to death," said Qâsim. "Nonsense!" said the king, "you are a great liar."

* Not to be found in books. The story was narrated to me.

As Hâshim was not there to support him, Qâsim did not know how to prove his statement, and was very much confused, whereupon the king ordered his servants to flog him and to drive him out of the palace.

Some time after this, Hâshim went to Qâsim and said: "Come friend, let us again go to the king, and earn a large reward with another big lie." "I would rather not accompany you," said Qâsim, rubbing his shoulders at the remembrance of the flogging he had received; "you may go alone. And besides, to tell you the truth, I have found that it does not pay to tell lies." "Ho! Ho!" said Hâshim, "since when have you become a lover of truth? Tell me what has happened," added he with a significant glance at Qâsim's shoulders; "you seem to have felt the lash *there*; is it not so? Well, this is what comes of trying to play false with your friend. But let me hear the details."

Thus pressed, Qâsim told him of his recent adventure. "Well, we shall soon put this right," said Hâshim, "come with me to the king and repeat the same lie; I will corroborate your statement." "But I shall be flogged again!" "You will not be: I tell you. You may rely on my ingenuity."

So the two went again to the king, and Qâsim repeated his tale of the merchant's bullock having been burnt to death when plunged in water. "Ha!" said the king, "was not that flogging sufficient for you, that you dare to come to me again with your cock-and-bull story?" "He tells the truth, Your Majesty," interposed Hâshim, "I myself was an eye-witness of the occurrence, and can explain to you how it happened." "Go on, my ears are open," said the king. "The circumstances were these," said Hâshim, "the bullock was loaded with bags of quicklime, and in attempting to cross the river, he stumbled and fell; the bags were moistened, and—" "O, you need not add more. I can understand what followed," said the king; "the quicklime coming into contact with water gave out heat, and the poor bullock was roasted?" "Just so, Your Majesty." "This is no lie then, as I thought first," said the king, and dismissed them with rewards.

220. An unlucky man once narrated his adventures to a company of men as follows:—

“About three years ago there was a famine in Isfahan, and we all of us found it very difficult to procure the necessaries of life. One day, on finding my purse empty, and all my stock of provisions exhausted, I took my way to the mosque, hoping to obtain relief from the charity of some rich people. I was walking along gloomily, when I felt my arm grasped by a veiled woman who said to me, pouring at the same time a handful of silver coins into my palm: ‘Come with me to the Kâzi, and swear that you are my husband, and that you want to divorce me. That is all I require of you. Will you do it?’ I readily promised to do as she desired, and followed her to the court of the Kâzi, who after hearing our words gave us divorce. The woman then, to my surprise, took out from underneath her cloak a bundle, which proved to be a living child, and turning to the Kâzi, she said, ‘O Kâzi, I have not milk enough in my breasts to suckle this child, nor have I the means of obtaining suitable nourishment for it.’ I was accordingly saddled with the bringing up of the child, and I came out of the court with my mind dazed and bewildered. Owing to the concourse of the people in the streets I could not leave the child and run off, and I had therefore to carry it, till I came to a mosque. I deposited my burden on the door-steps of the mosque, and made off; but unfortunately I was seen in the act by some people roundabout, was pursued, overtaken, soundly belaboured, and again made to take up the child in my arms. I wandered about with my burden, till I came to a tomb outside the town. I left the child there and ran off with all my might. As I was very thirsty, I made towards the river, and after allaying my thirst, sat underneath a tree for repose. I had hardly rested a while, when there came a horseman, who beckoned to me, and giving me a jug, told me to fill it with water. As I was filling it in the stream, the jug slipped from my hand, and was carried off; whereupon the horseman became very angry, and began flogging me.

I disengaged myself from his grasp, and fled again, till I came to what seemed to be a building in ruins. On entering, I stumbled, and fell down in a swoon. When I came to my senses, I found myself in a well-furnished room. As there was no one present, and I was hungry, I turned my steps towards the kitchen, where I found some eggs and a quantity of butter. I ate as much of the

butter and the eggs as I could, and then hastily concealing the remainder of the butter in my breast pocket, and two or three eggs in the folds of my turban, I issued out of the kitchen. But in my hurry I had mistaken the door, and I found myself in a room wherein an old woman was sitting by the fire, sewing linen. She asked me how I came to be there, and what I wanted. I replied that I was a traveller, and wanted to rest myself a bit, but seeing no one in the front room, had ventured to come there. She therefore gave me a seat by the fire, which I could not decline, although the thoughts of the butter made me very uneasy. Presently my garments became greasy and wet, and I seemed to be overflowing with melted butter. The old woman, noticing my condition, became suspicious, and calling me an idiot for spoiling her carpet, dealt me a blow on the head, when—smash went the eggs, and the yolk and the white began to trickle down my face! I could not endure the scene any longer, and I fled.

I went to the river, and washing my garments, hung them up on a tree to dry. A kite attracted by my red turban, pounced upon it and flew off with it. Fearing that I might lose my other garments in a similar way, I hastily put them on again, and turned my steps towards a neighbouring mansion. One of the servants in the house was my friend, and through his recommendation I was engaged there as a servant.

One day my master went out a-hunting, with a hound and a hawk, and I accompanied him. On the homeward journey my master was detained by some villagers, who wanted to entertain him, and so he told me to take home the hawk and the hound. After I had gone some distance, the hawk began to flutter in my hands, and beat me with his wings, which so enraged me that I doubled it up and put it in my saddle-bag. Further on, the hound was attacked by some wild dogs, but in the confusion of the moment I forgot to take off his muzzle and to let go the leash, and so he was torn to pieces. When I reached the mansion, I alighted from my horse, and took out the hawk from my saddle-bag, but the hawk was dead. Fearing the anger of my master, I began to cry and lament, which attracted the attention of my master's wife. She took compassion on me and told me to be quiet, promising to make it up to her husband for the loss of the animals. She then told me

to take charge of her child, while she went into the kitchen to attend to the cooking.

After a time the child began to cry, and I forced down its throat a bolus of opium—about the same quantity that I usually took myself—for I had frequently heard my grandmother say that opium was a good thing for soothing the children. After some time my mistress returned from the kitchen, and took the child into her arms to suckle it, but was horrified to find that the child was dead. She shrieked and fell down into a swoon, and on recovering, began to cry and lament. Presently my master returned, and learnt all the circumstances that had happened. His eyes rolled with fury, and he was going to kill me when his wife interposed, saying: ‘Deal gently with him, husband, for he seems to be an unlucky man. The fault lies more with his fortune than with him.’ So the husband let me go, saying, ‘I forgive you for this time, but let me see you giving more attention to what you are required to do. Now go to the stable, but keep awake the whole night, and look to the sick cow that is there. When you find her on the point of death, cut her throat, reciting the religious formula, so that the use of her flesh may not be unlawful. And also attend to the comforts of my tired horse.’

I went into the stable, and tried to keep myself awake, but gradually dozed off into peaceful slumber. In the midst of the night I awoke with a start, and remembering the injunctions about the cow, I went to look after the animal. But in the hurry I had overturned the lamp, so I had to grope about in the dark, till my hands encountered the side of an animal. From its laboured breathing I felt sure it was the cow in the throes of death, and so I whipped out my knife, and reciting the religious formula, drew it across the throat of the creature. In the morning I discovered that I had slaughtered the horse, while the cow had died of the illness. Fearing to encounter my master I ran off, and have been wandering about ever since.”

221. A person named Fareed had a beautiful wife, with whom a Jew was in love. The husband being poor and without any occupation, remained for the most part in his house, and the Jew could not get any opportunity of laying siege to the affections of his wife.

So the Jew began to devise means for getting the husband away from the city, and accordingly one day said to him, "My friend, why do you remain idle here? Why do you not travel in order to become a successful trader? The little money that I have acquired was by travelling from place to place, bartering the commodity of one place for that of another, and so on." The husband replied, "It is all very well to say so, but you know trading requires money. And who is going to lend me the money necessary for the purpose?" The Jew hereupon offered to accommodate him, saying, "I will lend you gold weighing one hundred *misqâls*, on the condition that you return it to me on the very first day of your return to town from your journey." "But what security can I give to you?" asked Fareed. "None whatsoever do I need, but for form's sake, what say you to a hundred *misqâls* of your flesh, which, on your failing to make the payment, I should be at liberty to cut off from your body?"

The condition was agreed upon, and Fareed, with the money in his pocket, left the town with the view of seeing the different commercial centres. On the road he was attacked by robbers, who stripped him of everything valuable that he possessed; and so he was obliged to return, almost naked, to the town. The Jew was very much vexed on seeing him back in so short a time, and demanded back his money. As Fareed had absolutely nothing and could not comply with the demand, he said, "Let us go to the Kâzi, and let him decide in this matter." So the two took their way towards the court of the Kâzi.

On the road they heard a donkey-driver asking for help, as his ass had fallen into a pit, whence he was not able to take him out without the help of others. Fareed good-naturedly offered to help him, and while the owner took hold of the ass, Fareed took hold of the tail, and the two began to pull when suddenly the tail of the animal came off in the hands of Fareed. The owner of the ass thereupon began to quarrel with him, and said, "Come with me to the Kâzi. You must pay me damages." So the three now took their way to the court of the Kâzi.

But as the Kâzi's court was situated at some distance, and as it was already night-fall, they determined to put up in a mosque, for the night. Fareed was locked up in the mosque, and the other

two kept guard outside the gate. When it was near dawn, Fareed, desiring to escape, got up, and going to the terrace at the back of the building, jumped down, and came plump on the head of a Fakeer who was sleeping at the foot of the wall. The Fakeer was killed. His son got up and laying hold of Fareed, charged him with the murder. The noise brought the other two persons who were near the gate, and so the four now took their way to the court of the Kâzi.

During the walk Fareed said to himself, "I wish the court were soon reached; for I am afraid, the longer I am on the road the more will be the mishaps befalling me. I had better move on with a quicker pace." And with this determination he walked faster, followed by his prosecutors. But on turning a corner he collided with a pregnant woman, who fell down with the shock, and miscarried. The husband of the woman caught hold of him, and accused him of killing the child, and the five now took their way to the court of the Kâzi.

The court was at last reached. The Kâzi was in his private room, and so they all had to wait outside it, but after a time Fareed getting afraid of another mishap entered the room alone. He found the Kâzi drinking wine, and so he stood quiet for some time, and then coughed to attract the attention of the Kâzi. The latter turned with a start, and asked him what he wanted, saying "How long have you been here and what did you notice?" Fareed discreetly replied that he had merely seen the Kâzi drinking *sherbet* (emphasizing the last word), and then related to him his adventures. "Well, well," said the Kâzi, "we shall see justice done to you." They then came into the court, and the Kâzi, after taking his seat, asked the men what were their complaints.

First came the Jew who claimed his hundred *misqâls* of flesh. The Kâzi told him to cut it off, but *neither more nor less than the hundred misqâls*, otherwise he would have to undergo the penalty of being bled to death. The Jew, on hearing this decision of the Kâzi wanted to withdraw his complaint, but this the Kâzi would not allow, saying, "You ought to have thought of that beforehand. You have needlessly put this man to a deal of trouble, and as a penalty you must pay one hundred dinars. Only then can I allow you to go." So the Jew laid down one hundred dinars and departed.

Next came the son of the Fakeer who charged Fareed with the death of his father. The Kâzi said: "You must take his life in return. Kill him in the same way that he killed your father—by jumping down on him from the terrace." "But I might get killed myself, jumping down from such a height!" urged the young Fakeer. "I cannot help that!" said the Kâzi. The Fakeer then wanted to withdraw his complaint, but he was not allowed to do so till he had laid down one hundred dinars.

The husband of the woman now laid his complaint, and charged the accused with the death of his child. The Kâzi said to him, "It is but proper that the man should restore to you the young life that he has taken. I therefore order that you should divorce your wife, and give her to this man in marriage. When she is again with child, he shall then divorce her, and you can take her back." So the husband too withdrew his complaint, laying down one hundred dinars.

The owner of the donkey had meanwhile slunk away unperceived, saying, as he went, to the attendants in the antechamber that as he had not the sum necessary for withdrawing his complaint, he was going to bring witnesses to prove that his ass had never a tail!

When the Kâzi saw that there was no further complaint against Fareed, he dismissed him, giving him as compensation for his trouble a hundred dinars out of the sums received.

222.* A certain lawyer had a very ugly daughter, who was marriageable; but although he offered a considerable dower, no one was inclined to wed her. Through necessity, he married her to a blind man. In the same year there arrived from Ceylon a physician who was reputed to be able to restore sight to the blind. They asked the father why he would not have his son-in-law cured. He said: "Because I am afraid that if he should recover his sight, he would divorce his wife."

223.* Some of the servants of Sultan Mahmood asked Hasan Meimandi what the king had said to him about a certain affair. He answered: "Are you also acquainted with it?" They replied: "You are the prime minister of the empire; whatever the king says to you he does not think proper to tell to such persons as we are." He replied: "He tells it to me in the confidence that I will not declare it to any one; why then do you ask me?"

* From the *Gulistân* of Sa'âdi.

224.* A certain poet went to the chief of a gang of robbers, and recited verses in his praise. The chief ordered him to be stripped of his clothes, and expelled the village. The dogs attacking him in his rear, he wanted to take up some stones, but they were frozen to the ground. Thus distressed, he said: "What a vile set of men are these, who let loose their dogs, and fasten their stones!" The chief having heard him from a window laughed and said: "O wise man, ask a boon of me." He answered: "I want my own garment, if you will vouchsafe to bestow it. I have no further expectation from you. I am satisfied with your benevolence in suffering me to depart." The chief of the robbers ordered his garment to be restored, and added to it some reward.

225.* An astrologer entered his own house, and seeing a stranger sitting in company with his wife, abused him, and used such harsh language that a quarrel and strife ensued. A shrewd man, being apprized thereof, said: "What do you know of the celestial sphere, when you cannot tell who is in your own house?"

226.* A certain person, who performed gratis the office of Muezzin in the mosque of Sanjaryah, had such a voice as disgusted all who heard it. The intendant of the mosque, an Ameer, a good humane man, being unwilling to offend him, said: "My lad, this mosque has Muezzins of long standing, each of whom has a monthly stipend of five dinars; now I will give you ten dinars to go to another place." He agreed to this proposal and went away. Some time after he came to the Ameer and said: "O my lord, you injured me, in sending me away from this station for ten dinars; for where I went they will give me twenty dinars to remove to another place, to which I have not consented." The Ameer laughed, and said: "Take care, don't accept the offer, for they may be willing to give you fifty."

227.* A little man, being afflicted with a pain in his eyes, went to a farrier, desiring him to apply a remedy. The farrier, applying to his eyes what he was used to administer to quadrupeds, the man became blind; upon which he complained to the magistrate.

The magistrate said: "Get away, there is no plea for damages, for had you not been an ass, you would not have applied to the farrier."

228. The son of a rich man, sitting by his father's tomb, was disputing with the son of a dervish, saying: "My father's

* From the *Gulistan* of Sa'adi.

monument is of stone, the inscription is in gold, and the pavement is made of marble tessellated with turquoise-coloured bricks. What is your father's grave, but a couple of bricks laid together, and sprinkled with a handful of earth!" The son of the dervish replied: "Hold your tongue, for before your father can move himself from under this heavy stone, mine will have arrived at Heaven."

229. A one-eyed man laid a wager with a person having two eyes that he could see more than the other could. When the wager was accepted, he said, "I have won, because I can see two eyes in your face, while you can see only one in mine."

230. A man sold a well to a neighbour, and when the latter wanted to draw water therefrom, he wrangled with him, saying, "I have sold you the well only, not the water therein. For the use of the water you must pay extra."

The case was taken to a Kazi, who, after hearing both sides, said to the vendor, "If you have sold the well only and not the water, you have no right to keep your water in the other man's well, and you must be fined. Remove all the water from the well at once, or pay the buyer such and such rent."

The seller was therefore obliged to come to terms with his neighbour, and returned home a sadder and a wiser man.

231. A man said to another, "I have a small request to make." "Small, is it?" said the other; "well let it remain till it grows big."

232. They said to a learned man, "We have seen a person who is so much affected by the reading of the Qoran, or by hearing it read that he faints." "I shall believe this," said the scholar, "if when sitting on a high wall he read the Qoran or hear it read, and if he then faints."

233. A king once asked a courtier, "How is it that there are no hairs on my palm?"

"Because your generosity makes frequent use of your palms for 'giving,' and so the hairs have got rubbed off," was the reply.

"Then why have the palms of other people no hairs on them? What has rubbed them off?"

"Their habit of 'receiving' your bounty so often."

"And what of those who neither give nor receive?"

"They are in the habit of rubbing their hands in regret at having passed their lives without either giving or receiving."

234. A man once paid a neighbourly visit to a sick acquaintance. He sat there for some time and when he rose to depart, he, in order to show the concern he felt and to impress the people with his neighbourliness, said aloud to the persons about the bedside of the patient, "Last time when there was death in the family you forgot to give me intimation. Do not fail this time to inform me of the death of our beloved friend, for I should very much like to attend his funeral."

235. A man married a profligate woman. He said to her, "You must choose one of two courses so that we may pull on well together. One course is, that in going out of the house you should submit to my wishes, while you will have full liberty to dress as you like. The other course is that in the matter of dress you should submit to my wishes, while you will have no restraint on your going out." The woman who wished to be uncontrolled in her comings and goings agreed to the second course and swore to be faithful to her promise.

The husband then clad her in old and shabby garments. The effect of this was that the woman gradually gave up gadding about, took to staying at home, repented, and reformed.

236. A youth meeting one day a very old man who, leaning on his staff, formed with his curved person almost the figure of a bow, said, "How much, Sheikh, have you paid for that bow? I want to buy just such another." "Have patience, my son," rejoined the old man, "if you live long enough, you will get such a one for nothing."

237.* A shopkeeper of Isfahân went to the governor of the city to represent that he could not pay an impost. "You must pay it, like others," said the governor, "or leave the city." "Where can I go?" asked the man. "To Shiraz or Kashan." "Your nephew rules the one city and your brother the other." "Go to the king, and complain if you like." "Your brother Hajee Ibrahim is prime minister." "Then go to hell!" said the enraged governor. "The pious Hajee—your father, is dead"—retorted the undaunted Isfahanee. "My friend," said the governor, bursting into a laugh, "I will pay the impost myself, since you declare my family keeps you from all redress, both in this world and the next."

* From Malcolm's *Sketches of Persia*.

238.* A thief mounted to the top of a rich man's house, but the latter, hearing his footsteps, and guessing his object, woke his wife to whom he whispered what had occurred. "I shall feign sleep," said he to her; "do you pretend to awake me, and commence a conversation loud enough to be heard by the thief. Demand of me with great earnestness how I amassed my wealth, and notwithstanding my refusal, urge me to a confession." The woman did as she was desired, and the husband, evidently with a great deal of hesitation, and seeming wearied with her importunities, confided to her the following secret, making her swear never to reveal it to any one. "Learn, my dear wife," said he, "that all my wealth is plunder. I was possessed of a mysterious charm, by which, when standing on moonlit nights near the walls of the houses of the rich, I could, by repeating the word 'Sholim, Sholim' seven times, and at the same time laying my hand on a moonbeam, vault on the terrace. When there, I again exclaimed 'Sholim, Sholim' seven times, and with the utmost ease jumped down into the house, and again pronouncing 'Sholim, Sholim' seven times, all the riches in the house were brought to my view. I took what I liked best, and for the last time calling out 'Sholim, Sholim' I sprang through the window with my booty; and through the blessing of this charm, I was not only invisible, but preserved from even the suspicion of guilt. This is the mode with which I have accumulated the great wealth with which you are surrounded. But beware, and reveal not this secret; let no mortal know it, or the consequence may be fatal to us all."

The robber who had anxiously listened to this conversation, treasured up with delight the magic words. After a time, he, believing all in the house asleep, and having got upon the window, called out "Sholim, Sholim" seven times, and springing forward, fell headlong into the room. The master of the dwelling, who was awake, expecting this result, instantly seized the fellow, and after soundly belabouring him asked him who he was. The thief replied: "I am that senseless blockhead that a breath of yours has consigned to the dust." The merchant called in his neighbours, and had the thief delivered over to the police.

* From Malcolm's *Sketches of Persia* (Taken from عيار دانش. It is of Indian origin. A similar story is in the *Gesta Romanorum*.)

239.* Sâdik Beg was of good family, handsome in person, and possessed of both sense and courage; but he was poor, having no property but his sword and his horse, with which he served as a gentleman retainer of a nabob. The latter, satisfied of the purity of Sâdik's descent, and entertaining a respect for his character, determined to make him the husband of his daughter Huseinee who, though beautiful, was remarkable for her haughty manner and ungovernable temper.

Giving a husband of the condition of Sâdik Beg to a lady of Huseinee's rank was, according to usage in such unequal matches, like giving her a slave, and as she heard a good report of his personal qualities, she offered no objections to the marriage, which was celebrated soon after it was proposed, and apartments were assigned to the happy couple in the nabob's palace.

Some of Sâdik Beg's, friends rejoiced in his good fortune, as they saw, in the connection he had formed, a sure prospect of his advancement. Others mourned the fate of so fine and promising a young man, now condemned to bear through life all the humours of a proud and capricious woman; but one of his friends, a little man called Merdek, who was completely henpecked, was particularly rejoiced, and quite chuckled at the thought of seeing another in the same condition with himself.

About a month after the nuptials, Merdek met his friend, and with malicious pleasure wished him joy of his marriage. "Most sincerely do I congratulate you, Sâdik," said he, "on this happy event." "Thank you, my good fellow, I am very happy indeed, and rendered more so by the joy I perceive it gives my friends." "Do you really mean to say you are happy?" said Merdek with a smile. "I really am so," replied Sâdik. "Nonsense," said his friend, "do we not all know to what a termagant you are united? and her temper and high rank combined must, no doubt, make her a sweet companion." Here he burst into a loud laugh, and the little man actually strutted with a feeling of superiority over the bridegroom.

Sâdik, who knew his situation and feelings, was amused instead of being angry. "My friend," said he, "I quite understand the grounds of your apprehension for my happiness. Before I was married I had heard the same report as you have done of my beloved

* From Malcolm's *Sketches of Persia*.

bride's disposition; but I am happy to say I have found it quite otherwise: she is a most docile and obedient wife." "But how has this miraculous change been wrought?" "Why," said Sâdik, "I believe I have some merit in effecting it, but you shall hear. After the ceremonies of our nuptials were over, I went in my military dress, and with my sword by my side, to the apartment of Huseinee. See was sitting in a most dignified posture to receive me, and her looks were anything but inviting. As I entered the room, a beautiful cat, evidently a great favourite, came purring up to me. I deliberately drew my sword, struck its head off, and taking that in the one hand and the body in the other threw them out of the window. I then very unconcernedly turned to the lady who appeared in some alarm; she, however, made no observations, but was in every way kind and submissive, and has continued so ever since."

"Thank you, my dear fellow," said little Merdek, with a significant shake of the head—"a word to the wise;" and away he capered, obviously quite rejoiced.

It was near evening when this conversation took place; soon after, when the dark cloak of night had enveloped the bright radiance of day, Merdek entered the chamber of his spouse, with something of a martial swagger, armed with a scimitar. The unsuspecting cat came forward to welcome the husband of her mistress, but in an instant her head was divided from her body by a blow from the hand which had so often caressed her. Merdek having proceeded so far courageously stooped to take up the dismembered members of the cat, but before he could effect this, a blow upon the side of the head from his incensed lady laid him sprawling on the floor.

The tattle and scandal of the day spreads from zenâneh to zenâneh with surprising rapidity, and the wife of Merdek saw in a moment whose example it was that he imitated. "Take that," said she, as she gave him another cuff; "take that, you paltry wretch; you should," she added, laughing him to scorn, "have killed the cat on the wedding day."

240.* The Persians think it a reproach for a man of a warlike nation not to ride well, but none for him to get drunk, especially if a European.

An officer of one of the frigates, who had gone ashore to visit the British Envoy at Persia, when mounted on a spirited horse, afforded no small entertainment to the Persians by his bad horsemanship.

* From *Malcolm's Sketches of Persia*.

The next day the man who supplied the ship with vegetables, and who spoke a little English, met him on board, and said, "Don't be ashamed, Sir, nobody knows you: bad rider! I tell them, you, like all English, ride well, but that time they see you, very drunk!"

241.* An inhabitant of Isfahān was once compelled to travel alone at night through a valley which was reputed to be haunted by ghouls and demons. He was a man of ready wit, and fond of adventures, and, though no lion, had great confidence in his cunning. This man, whose name was Ameen Beg, had heard many stories of the ghouls of the valley, and thought it likely he might meet one. He prepared accordingly, by putting an egg and a lump of salt in his pocket. He had not gone far amidst the rocks when he heard a voice crying: "Holloa, Ameen Beg, Isfahānee! You are going the wrong road, you will lose yourself: come this way; I am your friend Kareem Beg; I know your father, old Kerbela Beg, and the street in which you were born." Ameen knew well the power the ghouls had of assuming the shape of any person they chose; and he also knew their skill as genealogists, and their knowledge of towns as well as families; he had therefore little doubt this was one of those creatures alluring him to destruction. He, however, determined to encounter him, and trust to his art for his escape.

"Stop, my friend, till I come near you," was his reply. When Ameen came close to the ghoul, he said: "You are not my friend Kareem, you are a lying demon, but you are just the being I desire to meet. I have tried my strength against all the men and all the beasts which exist in the world, and I can find nothing that is a match for me. I came therefore to this valley in the hope of encountering a ghoul, that I might prove my prowess upon him."

The ghoul, astonished at being addressed in this manner, looked keenly at him, and said: "Son of Adam, you do not appear so strong." "Appearances are deceitful," replied Ameen, "but I will give you a proof of my strength." "There," said he, picking up a stone from a rivulet, "this contains a fluid: try if you can so squeeze it that it will flow out." The ghoul took the stone, but after a short attempt, returned it, saying: "The thing is impossible." "Quite easy," said the Isfahānee, taking the stone and placing it in the hand in which he had before put the egg: "Look there!" And the

* From Malcolm's *Sketches of Persia*.

astonished ghoul, while he heard what he took for the breaking of the stone, saw the liquid run from between Ameen's fingers, and this apparently without any effort.

Ameen, aided by the darkness, placed the stone upon the ground, while he picked up another of a darker hue. "This," said he, "I can see contains salt, as you will find if you can crumble it between your fingers;" but the ghoul looking at it, confessed he had neither knowledge to discover its qualities nor strength to break it. "Give it me," said his companion impatiently; and having put it into the same hand with a piece of salt, he instantly gave the latter all crushed to the ghoul, who, seeing it reduced to powder, tasted it, and remained in stupid astonishment at the skill and strength of this wonderful man.

Neither was he without alarm lest his strength should be exerted against himself. Under such circumstances he thought his best plan was to conciliate the friendship of his new companion, till he found an opportunity of destroying him.

"Most wonderful man," he said, "will you honour my abode with your presence; it is quite at hand: there you will find every refreshment; after a comfortable night's rest you can resume your journey."

"I have no objection, friend ghoul, to accept your offer; but mark me, I am, in the first place, very passionate, and must not be provoked by any expressions which are in the least disrespectful; and, in the second, I am full of penetration, and can see through your designs as clearly as I saw into that hard stone in which I discovered salt. So take care, you entertain none that are wicked or you shall suffer."

The ghoul declared that the ear of his guest should be pained by no expression to which it did not befit his dignity to listen; and he swore by the head of his liege lord, the Angel of Death, that he would faithfully respect the rights of hospitality and friendship.

Thus satisfied, Ameen followed the ghoul through a number of crooked paths, rugged cliffs, and deep ravines, till they came to a large cave which was dimly lighted.

"Here," said the ghoul, "I dwell, and here my friend will find all that he can want for refreshment and repose." So saying he led him to various apartments, in which were hoarded every species of grain and all kinds of merchandise, plundered from travellers

who had been deluded to this den, and of whose fate Ameen was too well informed by the bones over which he now and then stumbled and by the putrid smell produced by some half consumed carcasses.

"This will be sufficient for your supper, I hope," said the ghoul taking up a large bag of rice: a man of your prowess must have a tolerable appetite." "True," said Ameen, "but I ate a sheep and as much rice as you have there before I proceeded on my journey. I am consequently not hungry, but will take a little lest I offend your hospitality." "I must boil it for you," said the demon, "you do not eat grain and meat raw as we do. Here is a kettle," said he, taking up one lying amongst the plundered property. "I will go and get wood for a fire while you fetch water with that," pointing to a bag made of the hides of six oxen.

Ameen waited till he saw his host leave the cave for the wood, and then with great difficulty he dragged the enormous bag to the bank of a dark stream which issued from the rocks at the other end of the cavern, and, after being visible for a few yards, disappeared underground. "How shall I," thought Ameen, "prevent my weakness being discovered? This bag I could hardly manage when empty; when full, it will require twenty strong men to carry it; what shall I do? I shall certainly be eaten up by this cannibal ghoul who is now only kept in order by the impression of my great strength." After some minutes' reflection, the Isfahânee thought of a scheme and began digging a small channel from the stream towards the place where his supper was preparing.

"What are you doing?" vociferated the ghoul as he advanced towards him; "I sent you for water to boil a little rice, and you have been an hour about it; cannot you fill the bag and bring it away?" "Certainly I can," said Ameen. "If I were content after all your kindness, to show my gratitude merely by feats of brute strength, I could lift your stream if you had a bag large enough to hold it. But here," said he, pointing to the channel he had begun; here is the commencement of a work in which the mind of a man is employed to lessen the labour of his body. This canal, small as it may appear, will carry a stream to the other end of the cave, in which I will construct a dam that you can open and shut at pleasure, and thereby save yourself infinite trouble in fetching water. But pray let me alone till it is finished," and he began to dig. "Non-

sense," said the ghoul, seizing the bag and filling it; "I will carry the water myself, and I advise you to leave off your canal, as you call it, and follow me that you may eat your supper and go to sleep; you may finish this fine work, if you like it, to-morrow morning."

Ameen congratulated himself on this escape, and was not slow in taking the advice of his host. After having eaten heartily of the supper that was prepared, he went to repose on a bed made of the richest coverlets and pillows, which were taken from one of the store-rooms of plundered goods. The ghoul whose bed was also in the cave, had no sooner lain down than he fell into a sound sleep. The anxiety of Ameen's mind prevented him from following his example; he rose gently, and having stuffed a long pillow into the middle of his bed, to make it appear as if he was still there, he retired to a concealed place in the cavern to watch the proceedings of the ghoul. The latter awoke a short time before daylight, and rising, went without making any noise towards Ameen's bed, where, not observing the least stir, he was satisfied that his guest was in a deep sleep, so he took up one of his walking sticks, which was in size like the trunk of a tree, and struck a terrible blow at what he supposed to be Ameen's head. He smiled not to hear a groan, thinking he had deprived him of life; but to make sure of his work he repeated the blow seven times.

He then returned to rest, but had hardly settled himself to sleep, when Ameen, who had crept into the bed, raised his head above the clothes and exclaimed: "Friend ghoul, what insect could it be that has disturbed me by its tapping? I counted the flap of its little wings seven times on the coverlet. These vermin are very annoying, for though they cannot hurt a man, they disturb his rest!"

The ghoul's dismay on hearing Ameen speak at all was great, but that was increased to perfect fright when he heard him describe seven blows, any of which would have felled an elephant, as seven flaps of an insect's wing. There was no safety, he thought, near so wonderful a man, and he soon afterwards arose and fled from the cave, leaving the Isfahanee its sole master.

When Ameen found his host gone, he was at no loss to conjecture the cause, and immediately began to survey the treasures with which he was surrounded, and to contrive means for removing them to his home.

After examining the contents of the cave, and arming himself with matchlock, which had belonged to some victim of the ghouls, he proceeded to survey the road. He had, however, only gone a short distance when he saw the ghouls returning with a large club in his hand and accompanied by a fox. Ameen's knowledge of the cunning animal instantly led him to suspect that it had undeceived his enemy, but his presence of mind did not forsake him. "Take that," said he to the fox, aiming a ball at him from his matchlock, and shooting him through the head; "take that for your not performing my orders. That brute," said he, "promised to bring me seven ghouls, that I may chain them and carry them to Isfahân, and here he has only brought you who are already my slave." So saying he advanced towards the ghouls; but the latter had already taken to flight, and by the aid of the club bounded so rapidly over rocks and precipices, that he was soon out of sight.

Ameen having well marked the path from the cavern to the road, went to the nearest town and hired camels and mules to remove the property he had acquired.

After making restitution to all who remained alive to prove their goods, he became, from what was unclaimed, a man of wealth, all of which was owing to that wit and art which ever overcomes brute strength and courage.

242. Once a witty Mulla said to a disciple, "Thou wast an ass, and I made thee a man." This was overheard by a simple-minded peasant, who next day brought to the Mulla his ass and some money, and said, "Make this ass also a man." The Mulla took the ass and the money, and told the peasant to call again after a few days. When the latter came on the appointed day the Mulla said, "You have come too late; your ass became a man, acquired learning, and has become a Kâzi of the neighbouring town. Go and take him with you."

The peasant picked up the halter and the pack-saddle, and went his way. He came to the town spoken of, and saw the Kâzi presiding with great solemnity over the law-court. He showed from afar a bundle of hay to the Kâzi, and said, "Come!" The Kâzi became purple with rage and exclaimed, "What donkey is this?" The peasant retorted, "It is thou who art my donkey, and feignest thou ignorance of it? I paid money to the Mulla to get thee made a man, and look! here is thy halter and pack-saddle!"

The Kâzi was, from mortification and shame, speechless for a while, but taking in the situation, and afraid of creating a scene, he called the peasant to his chamber, and after hearing his story, paid him sufficient money to content him, and sent him on his way, with strict injunctions not to talk of the matter to any one.

243. A person went to a lawyer and said, "I want to marry a second wife, but the relations of my intended bride insist on my divorcing my first wife. This, however, I do not want to do, nor can I forgo marrying the other woman. Advise me what I should do." The lawyer said, "Ask your present wife to go to the cemetery with some flowers for the tombs of your deceased relatives, and tell her to stay there praying for an hour or two. Then go to the relatives of your intended wife, and say to them, 'If, besides the wife I have in the cemetery, I have any other in my house or elsewhere, I divorce her, and be you my witnesses'."

The man did as he was told, and the ruse was successful. The relatives of the intended wife, believing that there was now no further obstacle, gave him the woman in marriage.

244. A king once propounded a riddle to his courtiers—"What is it that one cannot obtain however earnestly one may strive for it!" An officer present immediately exclaimed, "That is my salary, your Majesty! I have not received it for the last two years." The king was struck with the reply, and ordered an enquiry to be made. The overdue salary was then immediately paid, and arrangements were made for regular payments in future.

245. A learned man was once given a better place in an assembly than that given to a *Hâfiz* (i.e., one who knows the whole of the Korân by heart). The *Hâfiz* took offence, and addressing the assembly, enquired, "If there be the Korân and also other books, which would ye place the topmost?" The savant, who understood the drift of the question, drily retorted, "The Korân certainly, but not the *wrapper* of the Korân!"

246. A parasite was asked if he had good appetite. He replied, "That is the only property in the world poor wretches like me possess."

247. A Durweish was praying with sandals on his feet. A thief who had cast longing eyes on the sandals said to him, "Prayer with sandals on has no abiding power." He replied, "The prayer may not abide, but the sandals will!"

248. A person asked his friend to lend him his horse. He replied, "I have a horse, it is true, but he is black." "Are not black horses suitable for riding?" enquired the man. The friend replied, "When one does not want to lend, even this excuse sufficeth!"

249. A wit of Baghḍād and a wit of Egypt were once sitting together in the court of a prince, and were holding a whispered conversation between themselves. The prince asked, "What lie are you concocting?" "Your praise, Sire!" said they.

250. A Christian became a Musalmān, on which occasion the Kāzī said to him, "To-day thou hast received a new birth."

Six months later the man's neighbours brought him before the Kāzī and charged him with neglecting his daily prayers. The Kāzī said, "O thou sluggard! Why prayest thou not?" The new convert replied, "At the time when I became a Musalmān did you not tell me that I was reborn that day? It is only six months since then, and you know well that prayers are not obligatory on a child six months old."

251. Mashīd Shīrāzī was a seller of cooked meat, and was withal a crafty man. One day he cooked a lamb that was very lean, and the meat was also spoiled in the cooking, so that none of his customers would have it. Thereupon he went with the dish to a neighbour, who was a professional corpse-washer, and said "Friend, I am a poor old man, and I am afraid that when I die there will be no one to attend to the proper washing of my corpse, and I might be buried unwashed. Now I have cooked a fat lamb and have brought it as a present to you so that you and your family may feast thereon, and the only request I have to make is that when I die you will wash my body." The washer took the dish and agreed to the conditions.

After a week Mashīd put on a travelling dress, and knocked at the door of his neighbour, who opened it and enquired, "What can I do for you?" Mashīd said, "I am going to Damascus on urgent business, and who knows but the Angel of Death may visit me there? You will therefore have to accompany me, so that whenever I die you may be at hand to perform the last rites."

The corpse-washer was taken aback at this demand, and began to remonstrate. The dispute waxed warm and attracted a large

crowd. The washer, poor fellow, found the sympathy of the crowd with Mashid, and had ultimately to obtain a release from the agreement by paying double the price of the dish of meat.

252. The wife of a poor man who had a large family was one day preparing to go on a visit of condolence to a neighbour. Her husband asked, "Where are you going?" "To pay a visit of condolence," said she. "What food have you prepared for the children?" asked he. "Nothing. There is no flour, no salt, not even fuel in the house—what can I prepare?" said she. "Well then," said the husband, "it is to *our* house that a condolence visit should be paid by the neighbours; not for us to go to them!"

*The Three Deceitful Women.**

253. Once upon a time there were three whales of the sea of deceit—three men-deceiving women, on the theatre of whose stratagems even Satan was an admiring spectator. One was the wife of the Kâzi, the second of the Bazaar-Superintendent, and the third of the Superintendent of Police. Once when all the three were at the bath they came across a ring of priceless value, and there was dispute amongst them as to who was entitled to it. The matter was referred to the mother of the bath-keeper, who was accounted to be a very shrewd woman. She gave it as her advice that all three should exercise their arts of deception on their respective husbands, and the one whose tricks surpassed those of the others should have the ring, which in the meantime should remain in the possession of the old woman. This was agreed to, and the wife of the Kâzi was given the first chance to try her arts.

This woman had noticed for some time that her neighbour, a carpenter, was enamoured of her. She sent word to him through her confidential maid-servant, named Violet, that if he dug a subterraneous passage connecting his house with the Kâzi's he would attain his desire. The passage was dug, and the Kâzi's wife went to the carpenter. After reciprocal congratulations and compliments, the woman said to the carpenter, "To-morrow I shall come here, and you must bring the Kâzi to marry me to you." The carpenter

* From the *Shamsah-wa-Quhquhah* of Mirza Barkhurdâr Turkmân. The translation here given is an abridgment of the one published by the late Mr. Edward Rehatsek in his "Amusing Stories translated from the Persian."

entered into the fun of the thing, and next day went to the Kâzi. Holding out the promise of a handsome remuneration he asked him to come immediately to his place to perform a marriage ceremony. "I am the bridegroom myself," said he, "and the bride is waiting at my place. The moon is to-day in Libra and makes a beneficial aspect with Jupiter and the Sun. This propitious time will pass off in two hours, so come with me at once."

The Kâzi, whose cupidity was excited by the expected reward, joyfully accompanied the carpenter to his house. But when his eye alighted on the bride, he recognised in her the mistress of his own house. A thousand doubts beset him, but he composed himself as best he could. "This is a wonderful business," said he to himself, "and I have never come across two persons resembling each other so much." Seeing him lost in perplexity and agitation the carpenter exclaimed, "Make haste, sir, the time is passing. What is the use of delaying?"

The Kâzi looked up and again scrutinized the bride, but could find no difference between her and his own wife, so he exclaimed, "Praise be to God! There is no power nor strength but with Him!" He then put his hand to his breast and said, "What a poor memory I have?" and forthwith rose from his place. The carpenter asked, "O Kâzi, where are you going?" The Kâzi replied, "I have forgotten to bring my formulary. I must get it from my house. It contains a prayer which must be recited before pronouncing the matrimonial formula in order to ensure a happy married life."

Accordingly he went to his house, but was forestalled by his spouse, who entered it through the underground passage, divested herself of her bridal garments, and lay on the bed. When the Kâzi arrived, seeing his wife in this position he said, "I ask pardon of God for my transgressions. To what a strange suspicion have I given way! May God forgive me!"

When the woman heard these exclamations she yawned, and turned from one side to the other, saying, "Violet! Did not I tell you not to allow any one to enter the room that I might repose for a while?" The Kâzi spoke, "Beloved partner! There is no one here except me. Pardon me for having harboured evil suspicions concerning thee." "What words are these? Have you become mad?" exclaimed the lady.

The Kâzi replied not, and returned to the carpenter's house, but his wife had preceded him and was sitting in her place. As soon as he looked at her the same suspicion overwhelmed him, and he exclaimed in amazement, "O Lord of Glory! I have fallen into a strange predicament. I am between the horns of a dilemma, one of which urges me to quickly perform the ceremony, and the other to procrastinate." The carpenter said, "My lord Kâzi! why are you hesitating? Although as a neighbour you ought to perform the ceremony without recompense, lo! I give you these thousand dinars to induce you to make haste as time is passing."

The Kâzi put the money into his pocket and began—"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate," and continued to read the matrimonial formula till he arrived at the words—"I marry—" Then he perceived a black mole on the corner of the woman's lip, exactly like the one on his wife's. He felt uneasy, and the morsel of the thousand dinars tasted bitter in his mouth. He was again lost in bewilderment, and hesitated. He again looked at the woman: his uneasiness increased and he arose. The carpenter said, "O Kâzi! What fancy is moving you now, and why are you so confused to-day?" The Kâzi replied, "This marriage ceremony is of the greatest importance according to the Religious Law, and should not be performed unless after proper ablutions, about the completeness of which a doubt has just arisen in my mind; therefore I must return to my house and perform the ablutions anew." The carpenter answered, "You can wash yourself here." The Kâzi exclaimed, "No, by God! I never perform my ablutions with water that I have not seen before; I have all the arrangements for purification in my house."

Accordingly he returned to his house, but his wife was there before him, and when the Kâzi entered her room she found her absorbed in reading a book. He said, "I ask forgiveness from God, and repent of all my sins and transgressions!" The lady looked up with amazement and said, "I am afraid you are getting mad. How many times have you come and again gone away after holding a soliloquy as mad men do! You must take the proper steps to cure this distemper." The Kâzi said, "O queen of prudence and innocence! To-day I have indulged in a suspicion with reference to thee. I have made a mistake—forgive me." He then took out an apple-

from his pocket and, cutting it in two, gave one half to his wife saying, "Though apples have many qualities the chief of them is the increase of conjugal affection." The Kâzi kept the other half of the apple and went with it to the house of the carpenter. His wife preceded him as usual, and sat down in her place.

When he approached her he beheld the half apple in her hand; he was greatly amazed, but said nothing for fear of the carpenter. The latter said, "O Kâzi, tell me, for God's sake, what is in your mind, and what means this going hither and thither, and this procrastination. If this matter is disagreeable to you I shall bring another Mulla to perform the ceremony. From a neighbour like you I expected more kindness. If it is more money that you want, here are additional five hundred dinars."

When the Kâzi saw the money he was overcome by covetousness, and said, "Let happen what will!" And shutting his eyes he continued, "I take refuge with God from the wiles of Satan: I marry and couple—" Then his eye again alighted on his wife and he saw the ruby necklace which he had bought for three thousand dinars; he shook his head and said, "Every now and then I am obliged to stop; I do not know what is again distracting my attention," and he glanced every moment at his wife. The carpenter said, "O Kâzi! your amorous looks have convinced me that your desires are centred on the possession of this woman; your eyes are unceasingly wandering about her face. If this be the case make a clean breast of it so that we may ask her views on the matter."

The Kâzi, taking the carpenter to be an illiterate man, thought of playing a trick by reciting some other formula in place of the marriage formula, so that if his suspicions were confirmed the marriage would be null and void. Accordingly he sat down and began to recite some other jargon. But the carpenter, who was acquainted with the marriage formula, was not to be deceived. He rebuked the Kâzi, and told him to perform the ceremony in proper form. Thus urged, the Kâzi began reciting the proper formula, but when he saw again the half apple in the hand of the lady, he said, "Woman! give me this apple." She complied; the Kâzi took out the other half from his pocket, and placing the two halves against each other he found them to fit exactly. The carpenter exclaimed, "O Kâzi! what jugglery are you doing now, and why are you delaying again?" The Kâzi replied, "I have done this to produce conjugal love between you."

Then he again rose, and wanted to go to his house for the purpose of verifying his suspicions, but the woman turned to the carpenter and said: "Foolish man! hast thou brought me here to marry or to make a laughing stock of me? I have never seen such proceedings. I think his eyes have been affected by the disease called 'pearl-water'."

The Kâzi took no notice of these words, but hastened to his house, where his wife met him with the words: "O Kâzi! You look like those people who suffer from 'pearl-water' in the eyes." The Kâzi said, "There is no God but The God! The other woman spoke these very words! Tell me at any rate what kind of distemper this 'pearl-water' is." His wife replied, "'Pearl-water' is a humour arising from heavy particles in the stomach rising into the head and thence descending to the eyes, which become so affected, that different persons look alike and cannot be distinguished from each other. This malady if not properly treated degenerates into blindness." The Kâzi replied, "Perhaps this is due to my not having kept my depraved appetite in subjection," and confessed to having partaken of some forbidden food at the house of an Armenian.

He again returned to the carpenter's house, but instead of proceeding with the ceremony kept staring at the woman, whereupon the latter got offended, and asked the carpenter to drive him away and get another Kâzi. The carpenter too lost his patience and said angrily, "You have nearly killed me with your folly. I do not wish to marry if you consider this woman worthy of your harem. What makes you so undecided?"

Just at this moment the voice of the Muezzin was heard, and the carpenter exclaimed, "Alas! the propitious hour has passed off!" The Kâzi said: "You are a carpenter, you know how to handle the saw and the adze, to make windows and doors; what can you know of the heavens and the stars and the hours? This science belongs to our profession." So saying he pulled out an almanac from his pocket and said: "The moon is an orb of quick motion. Yesterday it entered the sign Libra, and has so quickly traversed the degrees that it feels tired to-day, and is still reposing; nor will it travel to-morrow. From to-day till to-morrow the propitious time will last. Just now I must go home and prepare some medicine for the 'pearl-water' in my eyes."

But the carpenter and the woman would not let him go. They caught hold of him and plainly gave him to understand that he would not be allowed to stir till he had tied the matrimonial knot. The Kâzi had perforce to marry the woman to the carpenter; and as at that time it was customary for the bride to kiss the hand of the Kâzi after the termination of the ceremony, the woman stepped forward to do so. The Kâzi, however, was anxious to have a new mark wherewith to confront his wife, and he slapped her face with such force that the jaws bled profusely.

Then he immediately ran to his own house, where he was met by his wife disfiguring her own face, scratching it, and exclaiming: "I renounce such an adulterous husband, who is carrying on intrigues with the carpenter's wife." The woman and her maidens took the Kâzi by the throat and pulled off his turban, and he was obliged to fly to the street. The carpenter, who had heard the noise came out, and seeing him with his head uncovered, placed his own turban upon it, saying: "O Kâzi! women are fools, and quarrels between husband and wife are not unfrequent. I am afraid you have lost your senses temporarily, and the best treatment for it would be to take yourself to a madhouse and repose there in quiet until such time as your wife repents of her deeds." And so the poor Kâzi was persuaded to go to a lunatic asylum.

The Kâzi's wife having thus succeeded in making a fool of her husband, communicated the fact to her two accomplices, and told them that the field was now open for the display of their arts.

It was now the turn of the Bazaar-master's wife to prove her craft. She had a faithful servant, a nurse, whom she took into her confidence, and sent to a young man, a banker's son who was enamoured of her, with a message of love. The youth was asked to come to the lady's room on the next day, but he was to put on a woman's veil, and was to bring with him wine and sweetmeats.

After the lady had sent the message her husband arrived, whereupon she spoke to him: "Dear husband! To-morrow one of the principal ladies of the town will come to me on a visit; I must receive her with all possible civility, and you must remain in the town-hall to-morrow till evening. Send in the supplies for a rich entertainment, and manage so that we may not have to be ashamed of our hospitality." Her husband complied with her request.

Next morning the banker's son put on costly garments, and perfumed himself, and wearing a large veil, under whose folds he had concealed a flask of wine, proceeded to the house of his mistress. She came down in person to receive him, took him to her inner apartments, and made him take off the veil and the upper garments. She expressed regret for past neglect, and telling him to wait, went out of the room on the pretext of arranging for the requisites of amusement. She then said to her female attendants: "Go, and call your master into the house, saying 'our lady has brought in a strange man and is amusing herself with him.'"

She then returned to the young man and kept him company, while her servants went on their errand.

The husband rushed home in great excitement, but while he was still at the outer door the lady went to the youth in evident fright, told him that her husband probably suspecting something wrong had returned unexpectedly, and got the youth to conceal himself in a chest. She collected his garments and then went out to meet her husband who was like a raging furnace. She quickly threw her arms around his neck and said, "Darling of my soul! I see thee greatly discomposed and ruffled. What is it?" He replied: "My reason is unwilling to put faith in what I have heard, and I want you to tell me the truth." The wife smiled and said, "What thou hast heard is quite true." She then confessed that she had felt no real love for her husband, and that for a long time she had had a passion for a young man. Hitherto she had denied herself, but that day she could not resist and had got the young man in her rooms. She pleaded that what she did was from a sense of religious duty, as her sweetheart had become ill for love of her, and that humanity and compassion which were the corner-stones of Islam had dictated the step she had taken. She compared comforting a lover to giving a draught of water to a traveller dying of thirst in a desert, and was proceeding in the same strain when her husband cut her short with—"Wretch and fool! What stupid words art thou saying?" The wife swore that what she said was true, and asked him, if he doubted her, to come and see with his own eyes. She led the way and the husband followed her to the inner apartment. When he beheld the clothes, the arrangements for drinking, and the decorations, his wrath was inflamed, and quite beside himself he asked

where the young man was. She replied, "I have concealed him in this chest; if you do not believe me, here is the key, open the chest and see." The Bazaar-master took the key, and was going to use it when the lady burst into laughter, clapped her hands together, and exclaimed, "I remember but you forget!"¹ Her husband threw away the key, and grumbling about his affections being trifled with thus, left the house. The young man was then taken out, more dead than alive, from the chest, and was sent away home with the admonition to give up his love for the lady.

The Bazaar-master's wife having reported to her friends the trick she had played, it was now the turn of the Police-Superintendent's wife to display her wiles.

The latter accordingly said one evening to her husband, "Tomorrow, I wish that we should both enjoy ourselves at home, and I wish to prepare some cakes which you like." The gentleman replied, "Very well, my dear, I also longed for such an occasion."

The lady had a servant named Hyacinth who was very much devoted to her. She called him, and giving him one thousand dinars told him to go to the monastery of *Kalandars*² in the vicinity, and to give the money to one of them and say, 'A prisoner whom the Ameer had given in charge of the police has escaped last night, and as the Superintendent of Police will be unable to produce him before the Ameer he has sent a man to get hold of thee, as thou resemblest the man, in order to pass thee off as the culprit. I have compassion for thee and mean to rescue thee; take this sum of money, give me thy dress, and flee from this town for thy life, without telling any one.'

The servant acted as he was bid, brought the garments of the *kalandar*, and handed them to his mistress.

When it was morning the lady saying to her husband, "I am going to make the sweetmeats to-day," made all her preparations and commenced to bake the cakes. The husband, who on account of his professional duties had not had sleep the previous night, indulged in a nap. The wife having prepared one of the cakes

1 مرا یاد ترا فراموش An expression used in children's play, when one person has succeeded in fooling another. Just like saying "April Fool!"

2 Mahomedan monks who shave their heads and faces, and renounce all worldly possessions.

with some opiate in it, awoke her husband and gave it to him to eat, saying "How long will you sleep? To-day is a day of feasting and pleasure, not of sleep and sloth. Lift up your head and see if the sweets are to your taste." The gentleman raised his head, ate some of the cake and again sank into his bed in deep unconsciousness.

His wife immediately undressed him, and put on him the garments of the *kalandar*. The servant shaved his head and beard, and made some tattoo marks on the body. When the night was far advanced, the servant, according to the instructions of his mistress, took his master on his back, and taking him to the monastery, placed him where the escaped *kalandar* used to sleep. He did all this quietly, without disturbing the sleeping *kalandars*, and returned.

Towards dawn the Superintendent recovered his senses a little. He felt thirsty, and fancying he was in his own house, exclaimed, "Narcissus! Bring water." The other *kalandars* awoke from sleep, and after hearing several shouts of this kind, they fancied that the crepula of *Bang* [i.e., the drug *Canabis Indica*] had taken effect upon him, and said, "Poor fellow! the narcissus flower is in the garden; this is the monastery of the sufferers. Arise and sober thyself, for the morning is approaching."

When the Superintendent heard these words he thought them part of a dream, because he had not yet fully recovered his senses. He sat quietly, but was amazed to behold the vaults and ceiling of the monastery; he got up, looked at the clothes in which he was dressed, and at the marks tattooed on his body; he began to doubt whether he was awake or asleep. He washed his face and perceived that the caravan of his moustaches and beard had likewise departed from the plain of his face. In this state of perplexity he went out of the monastery, and proceeded to his house. There his wife had already taken her measures, and she, with her male and female servants, was waiting in expectation of his arrival.

The Superintendent approached the house and knocked. Hyacinth answered the knock, and asked "*Kalandar*! whom seekest thou?" The Superintendent rejoined, "I want to enter the house." Hyacinth said, "Thou hast to-day evidently taken thy morning draught of *bang* earlier and more copiously than usual, since thou hast foolishly mistaken the road to the monastery. Depart! This

is not the place where vagabond *kalandars* are harboured. This is the house of the Superintendent of police, where even the phoenix would singe its wings if it had the impudence to look into it." The Superintendent said, "What nonsense art thou talking? Get out of my way, I do not relish thy imbecile prattle." But when he wanted to enter, Hyacinth struck him with a bludgeon on the shoulder; this the Superintendent returned with a box on the ear, and both engaged in a tussle. At that moment the lady and her maid servants rushed forth from the rear, and assailed the Superintendent with sticks and stones, shouting—

"This *kalandar*, in broad day-light, wants to force his way into the house of the Superintendent! What a pity that the Superintendent is ill, otherwise this crime would have to be expiated on the gallows." In the meantime all the neighbours assembled, and on seeing the shameless *kalandar's* proceedings said, "Look at the impudent *kalandar* who wants to force his entrance into the Superintendent's house!" Seeing the crowd increase and noticing their threatening attitude, the Superintendent had no other recourse than to fly. He was pursued by little boys who pelted him with stones, till they had driven him out of the town.

At a distance of three leagues from the town there was a village where the Superintendent concealed himself in a corner of the mosque; during the evenings he went from house to house and begged for food to sustain life, until his moustaches again grew and the tattoo marks gradually began to disappear.

Whenever any one enquired for the Superintendent at his house, he was informed by the servants that the gentleman was ill.

After one month had expired the grief of separation, and the misery of his condition again drove the Superintendent back to the city. He went to the monastery, because fear hindered him from going to the house. One day his wife saw him sitting, miserably clad in the company of *kalandars*, and she felt compassion for him. She then prepared a loaf of bread with some opiate in it, and calling her servant Hyacinth, said to him, "When the *kalandars* are asleep, go, place this loaf under the pillow of the Superintendent."

The servant did as he was told to do. When the gentleman awoke in the middle of the night, he was surprised to find the loaf. He fancied that when his companions had, during the night, returned from begging, they had placed it there for him, and accordingly he ate some of it.

During the same night the servant went there by the command of the lady, took his master on his back and carried him home. When it was morning the lady took off the *kalandar's* clothes from her husband, and dressed him in his own garments, and began to bake the cakes as on the former occasion. After some time the gentleman began to move, and his wife exclaimed: "Don't sleep so much; I have told you we shall spend this day in joy and pleasure; it was not fair of you to pass the time in this lazy way. Raise your head and see what nice cakes I have made for you."

When the Superintendent opened his eyes, and saw himself dressed in his own clothes and at home, he said in amazement: "God be praised! What had happened to me?" He sat up and exclaimed "Wife! Things have happened to me which I can scarcely describe!" His spouse replied, "From the uneasy movements which you have made in your sleep it appears that you must have had extraordinary dreams."

"Dreams forsooth!" cried the Superintendent, "since the moment I lay down I have experienced the most strange adventures!" She rejoined, "Certainly you must have taken some heavy food last night, and the food not agreeing with you the vapours thereof have ascended to your brain, and caused you all this distress." He said, "Yes, last night I had been to a party where I partook of *pilaw* more than usual, and to-day the vapour of it has occasioned me all this trouble."

In fine, when these three champions of the lists of Deceit had executed their stratagems, they met again in the bath according to agreement, in order to state their cases to the old hag, who had promised to award the ring to the most cunning one of the three, but to their great surprise and mortification they learnt that she had outwitted them all by absconding with the ring!

STORIES OF AKBAR, BIRBAL, AND MULLA DO-PYÂZAH.*

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1. Once Akbar asked a witty courtier of his named Birbal, whether there were more blind men in the world or more men with good eyes. Birbal replied that the number of blind men was greater. On being required to bring proofs in support of his assertion, he asked for two clerks, and accompanied by them he went into the bazaar.

Choosing a prominent place, he took his seat there, and began knitting stockings, the materials for which he had provided himself with on the way. Every one who saw him, came and asked, "Birbal, what are you doing here?" But Birbal, instead of replying, merely turned towards his clerks, and said, "Put him down as a blind man; for though he has eyes, he cannot see what I am doing."

In the evening when Birbal returned to the court, he told the clerks to show their registers to the king. When Akbar saw all the pages filled up with the names of blind persons and learned how they came to be called blind, he laughed and said: "Thou art right, Birbal; I now see that there *are* many blind men in the world."

2. One day Akbar was displeased with Birbal for some reason or other, and therefore the latter, deeming it a wise policy to remain away from the court for some time, left the city and concealed himself in some country town. The emperor's displeasure wore off after some time, and he again yearned for the company of his lively courtier, but the latter was nowhere to be found.

Akbar sent mandates to all the provinces requiring the rulers to find out Birbal and to send him up to the court; but still there was no trace of Birbal. The emperor then hit upon a very novel way of discovering his whereabouts. He sent letters to the various provinces to this effect: "We are holding festivities in honour of the marriages of our seas. Send *your* seas to take part in the festivities." The governors of the provinces and the subordinate officials were all very much puzzled, and they did not know what to do or what reply to send. Now this circumstance came to the ears of Birbal who dwelt incognito in a certain town.

He went to the governor of the place and said, "Your excellency, I can show you a way out of your perplexity. You may write back to the emperor: 'We are sending our seas. Please appoint an *istiqbâl* of your rivers and wells to receive them.'"

* Many of the stories about Birbal are apocryphal.

The advice was followed. Akbar at once guessed that Birbal must have had a hand in the drafting of the above reply. The hiding place of Birbal being thus discovered, he was soon brought back to the court, and was again received into royal favour.

3. Once Akbar had a casket got ready, containing rich presents for the Shah of Persia, and told Birbal to take it to the Persian court. Birbal undertook the charge, promising to depart within a week; but at the expiration of that period, he came to the emperor, and said: "I'd like to be excused, your Majesty, from going as an envoy to the Persian court, for I think Mulla Do-pyazah would be a fitter man. Besides he, being a Mussulman, would be more acceptable to the Shah than I, who am a Brahmin."

The excuse was accepted, and Mulla Do-pyazah, a celebrated wit of the time, was appointed as the envoy. The Mulla received the sealed casket from the hands of Birbal, and proceeded on his journey, little suspecting that the wily Brahmin had played him a trick, and had skilfully contrived to remove the contents of the casket replacing them with stones and earth.

In due time the Mulla reached the Persian court, and on a day appointed for the purpose, the casket was opened in full court. But great was the astonishment of all present, to find the casket filled with rubbish instead of with jewels. The Mulla was dumbfounded. The face of the Shah, who felt himself insulted, was terrible to behold. "Mulla! art thou tired of life that thou hast dared to come to me with this rubbish?" demanded he in a voice of thunder. But the Mulla, who had guessed that Birbal had played him this trick, had recovered his presence of mind. "May the Lord forgive us all!" replied he, "for, O king, these things that you call rubbish ought to be the most precious things in the eyes of every right-minded Shiah; these stones and this earth are from the very place where the martyrs fell at Kerbela. It was with great trouble and expense that His Majesty Akbar Shah procured these relics, and he has sent them to you, knowing well that they would be better appreciated by the people here than by the Sunni population of India."

These words had instantly the desired effect. Every one present looked with reverence towards the casket. The Shah was delighted, and was pleased to distribute the contents of the casket among the eager courtiers. And the Mulla, owing to his presence of mind, was saved from an imminent danger.

4. Mulla Do-pyâzah overcame, in theological arguments, the learned men of the court of Persia, and this circumstance gave rise to a feeling of jealousy in the hearts of the Persian courtiers, who resolved to do some mischief to the Mulla. Accordingly, they urged the Shah to ask the Mulla in full court, which was the greater king—Akbar or the Shah of Persia; for they knew well that if the Mulla answered one way or the other, the party disparaged would be sure to take revenge on him. So one day, the Shah said to the Mulla in full court, "Tell me, Mulla Saheb, which of us two—myself and Akbar Shah—is the greater king?" The Mulla turned pale, and for a time he could not give any reply, for well he knew that this was a trick played him by his enemies to ruin him. His silence irritated the Shah, who now said in a stern tone, "Well, Mulla, did you not hear my question? How long am I to wait for your reply?" The poor Mulla, driven into a corner, replied: "Oh, your Majesty! what comparison can there be between your august self and Akbar Badshah? You are like the *full moon*, while he is like the *new moon*." This reply pleased the Shah, who, after a few days, dismissed Mulla Do-pyâzah with costly presents.

When the Mulla returned to the court of Akbar he found the emperor incensed against him, for he had been pre-informed by some of the Persian courtiers of the events that had happened in the Persian court. "Well, Mulla, what is this that I hear of your doings?" demanded the king; "are you one of those wretches who make holes in the very dish from which they eat?" "What have I done, your Majesty?" humbly asked the Mulla. "Did you not disparage me in the presence of the Shah by comparing him to a *full moon* and me to a *new moon*?" "But, your Majesty," said the Mulla, "this comparison is in no way disparaging to you, for while the new moon, day by day, increases in lustre and magnificence, the fool moon, on the contrary, wanes and dwindles away. And, besides, your Majesty knows well how eagerly the eyes of all men are turned towards the sky at the beginning of every month, to look for the new moon, but no eagerness is shown even in the slightest degree, for the fool moon."

This ingenious reply of the Mulla put Akbar Shah into good humour, and he bestowed on the Mulla a robe of honour and other costly presents.

5. When Mulla Do-pyâzah was in Persia, he was one day invited by the Shah to look over his portrait gallery. The Shah, who

wanted to have a joke at the Mulla's expense, had previously ordered the portrait of Akbar to be displaced from its seat and put up in the royal privy. After showing him over the portrait gallery, the Shah said to the Mulla, "There is now left only one portrait worth seeing. I am sure you will recognise the person in the portrait; my chamberlain will show it to you." The Mulla was accordingly taken to that part of the building and shown the portrait of Akbar. The Mulla felt the insult, and resolved to be even with the Shah, but for the time he said nothing, and returned to the drawing-room.

"Well, Mulla, do you recognise whose portrait that is?" asked the Shah. "Yes, your Majesty." "Well, then, tell me who is the subject of the portrait, and also tell me, if you can, why the portrait is placed in such a place." The Shah expected to enjoy the mortification of the Mulla, but the latter replied calmly, and with dignity, "Your Majesty, the portrait is of an awe-inspiring king, whom you are so much in dread of, that the mere sight of his face acts on you like a purgative. You have, therefore, wisely chosen the site of the portrait so that you may never have to complain of constipation of the bowels!"

The Shah's face as he heard the reply, was worth studying; but as he had himself been the aggressor, he could not well resent this bold reply.

6. A learned Moulvi of Persia once came to Delhi, with the intention of overcoming, in learned discussion, Mulla Do-pyâzah, of whom he had heard so much. The trial of wit was appointed to take place in the presence of Akbar on a certain day. The Mulla prepared himself for the occasion in a very novel way. He got together some asses, buffaloes, and mules, and had them loaded with bricks, stones, sand, etc., and on the top of them he placed some books and pamphlets in such a way that all the panniers appeared to be full of books. On the panniers he placed labels with queer names such as, 'Gadha-ut-tafseer,' 'Bhensâ-ur-rikab,' 'Khachchar-ul-hikmat,' 'Eient-ul-hida,' 'Patthar-us-safa,'* etc. He then put on an immense turban, the tail or hanging portion of which was so very long that a page was employed to carry it. In this queer garb he appeared in the court, and the beasts carrying his precious library were made to stand in the capacious compound surrounding the place.

The Moulvi, on seeing him dressed in this fashion, asked, "Mulla Saheb, what is this that you have done?" The Mulla replied,

* A jumble of Hindian and Arabic words, meaning, 'The Ass of Commentary,' 'The Buffalo of Heads,' 'The Mule of Philosophy,' 'The Brick of Guidance,' 'The Stone of Purity,' etc.

“ Don’t you know the saying ‘ Let the size of your turban be in proportion to your knowledge ’? ” And with these words he took his seat.

A discussion took place, in which the Mulla with his ready wit proved more than a match for the Moulvi with all his learning. The latter then got up, and, with the view of testing the Mulla’s knowledge of signs and symbols, held up his forefinger. The Mulla showed two fingers in reply. On the Moulvi’s again showing three fingers, the Mulla showed four; and on the Moulvi’s showing the whole palm, the Mulla showed his clenched fist. The Moulvi seemed to be baffled, but after thinking for a while, he took out an egg from his pocket, and showed it to the Mulla, who, in return took out an onion from his own pocket, and showed it to the Moulvi. The latter hereupon asked, “ On what authority do you make this statement?” The Mulla, in reply, mentioned the names of the books—the queer names that he had put on the labels on the panniers. “ I hear these names for the first time ! ” exclaimed the Moulvi in surprise, for he being unacquainted with Hindi, the names ‘ *bhensa* ’ and ‘ *eint* ’ and ‘ *khachchar*, ’ etc., puzzled him very much. The Mulla replied, with a pitying smile, “ If you have not even heard the names of the books, you will have to be as long-lived as Noah in order to master the contents of the books. Just look out from the window, and see how many books I have brought with me.” The Moulvi looked out, and on seeing what he thought to be a whole library of books, he returned to his seat, and acknowledged himself vanquished. “ You have not belied your fame, Mulla Saheb,” said he, “ what I had heard of with my ears, I have to-day seen with mine eyes.”

All the other persons present had been unable to make out what discussion the Mulla and the Moulvi carried on between themselves by means of signs. So, the Emperor beckoned to the Moulvi, and asked him in a whisper, “ What did you say to the Mulla in symbols and what replies did the make? ” “ Your Mulla is a very clever person,” said the Moulvi, “ for, when I showed him one finger, meaning that God is one, he showed me two, meaning that He is the Creator of the two worlds ‘ *Kaun-o-Makàn*, ’ this world and the next. On my showing him three fingers, which meant that in animal life there are three important stages—conception, birth and death—he showed me four fingers to imply that the animal *body* is composed of four elements—earth, water, fire and air. I then showed him

five fingers, alluding to the 'panj-tan,' or the five persons most blessed by God, viz., Mahommed, Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Huscin; whereupon he showed me his first, [which implied that God was their strength and support. Then I showed him an egg, which is a model of our earth and the heavens—the shell representing the sky which surrounds the earth on all sides. He showed me an onion, which meant that the sky was composed of layers upon layers, like the layers in the onion. Now I was aware of the heavens being nine, but was not prepared to acknowledge that there are as many heavens as there are layers in the onion; and I therefore asked him on what authority he made that statement. In reply, he mentioned the names of the books which I have not even seen, not to speak of reading them. Verily, this Mulla is a very learned man." The Moulvi then asked leave, and departed.

Akbar then called the Mulla to his side, and asked: "What was the conversation that you carried on with the Moulvi insigns?" The Mulla replied, "It was a very simple affair, Your Majesty. He pointed one finger at me, from which I inferred that he meant to say that he would poke his finger into one of my eyes. I, thereupon, showed him two fingers, meaning that I would pluck out both his eyes. He then showed me three fingers, which said plainly, 'I should like to give you three kicks'; and I showed him four, in return, which implied that I would return the compliment by giving him four kicks. He then showed me the whole of his palm, that is to say, he wanted to give me a slap on the face; and I showed him my fist, threatening knock him down with a blow of it. Seeing that I was up to all his dodges, he wanted to be friendly with me, and offered me an egg, whereupon I, determined not to be outdone in politeness, offered him an onion, to make an omelet of it!"

7. Akbar and some of his attendants were once sitting in the garden surrounding the palace, and in front of them was a large cistern, full of water. On the advice of Birbal, Akbar ordered some of the men present to procure an egg each, and to place it inside the cistern, in such a manner that it could easily be found when searched for. The order was obeyed; and after some time Mulla Do-pyâzah came there.

Akbar then turned to his attendants, and said, "Let me see; dive into the cistern and bring me an egg each: I dreamt last

night that those who are my faithful servants will not fail to find eggs inside this cistern." The attendants, one by one, dived into the cistern, and came out with an egg each. Akbar then said to the Mulla, "Well, Mulla Saheb, why do you not do as the others do?" The Mulla, thus pressed, stripped himself of his outer garments, and plunged into the water; but though he searched for a long time, he could not find a single egg. He then came out, and moving his arms in the manner of a cock flapping his wings, he cried out "Cock-a-doodle-doo."

"Mulla, what do you mean by this?" asked Akbar. "Your Majesty, those that brought you the eggs were hens," replied the Mulla; "I am a cock, and you should not expect any egg from me." Akbar laughed, and had the Mulla well rewarded.

8. Akbar was once seriously displeased with a musician of his court, and ordered him to quit his dominions. Some days after this circumstance, as Akbar was riding through a forest, he saw a man, who, at the sight of the Emperor, immediately climbed up a tree. Akbar rode up to the tree, and on looking up, recognised the musician whom he had exiled. Are you here still?", demanded Akbar; "did I not order you to quit my dominions?" The musician replied from amongst the branches, "Your Majesty, I went over the whole world, but wherever I asked the question—'whose dominions are these?' the invariable reply was that they belonged to the Emperor Akbar. So now, I have no other recourse left but to go to heaven, and to-day you see me already arrived at the first stage." The Emperor laughed, and forgave the musician.

9. Birbal was addicted to chewing tobacco, while to Akbar this habit was repugnant. Once when they were going together Akbar saw in a field where tobacco was growing, an ass standing but not eating any part of the crop. He turned to Birbal and said, "Look, even the ass turns away from such a vile stuff as tobacco!" Birbal quietly replied, "Yes, Sire, asses do not eat tobacco!"



